



Universidad de Valladolid

Facultad de Filosofía y Letras

Grado en Estudios Ingleses

**Translation of Metaphors in Song Lyrics from
Disney Animated Films: A Case Study**

Cristina Fernández Medina

Tutora: Isabel Pizarro Sánchez

Departamento de Filología Inglesa

Curso: 2024-2025

ABSTRACT

The translation of metaphors in song lyrics poses unique challenges due to the interaction between poetic language, musical constraints, and cultural references. This paper aims to analyze the translation of metaphors in songs from recent Disney animated films focusing on the specific challenges presented by the translation of figurative language in the context of audiovisual translation (AVT). For this purpose, metaphors were extracted from English original songs translated into peninsular Spanish in films such as *Encanto*, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, *Wish* and *Moana 2*. The analysis combines the cognitive model for classifying metaphors by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), with the metaphor-specific translation techniques proposed by Newmark (1988) and the translation procedures of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), studying how translators face the multiple constraints involved in the translation of metaphors in song lyrics for dubbing. The results show a predominance of structural and ontological metaphors, with the most frequent translation strategies being “same image reproduced in the TL” and “metaphor converted into sense” according to Newmark (1988), and modulation and literal translation following Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1995) model.

Key words: song, metaphor, translation, Spanish/English, Disney.

RESUMEN

La traducción de metáforas en letras de canciones presenta desafíos particulares debido a la interacción entre el lenguaje poético, las restricciones musicales y las referencias culturales. El objetivo de este estudio es analizar las metáforas en canciones de películas animadas recientes de Disney, centrándose en los retos específicos que presenta la traducción de lenguaje figurado en el contexto de la traducción audiovisual (TAV). Para ello, se han recopilado las metáforas de las canciones originales en inglés traducidas al español peninsular en canciones como *Encanto*, *Raya y el último dragón*, *Wish: el poder de los deseos* y *Vaiana 2*. El análisis combina el modelo cognitivo para la clasificación de metáforas de Lakoff y Johnson (1980), con las técnicas de traducción específicas para metáforas de Newmark (1988) y los procedimientos de traducción de Vinay y Darbelnet (1995), estudiando como los traductores se enfrentan a numerosas restricciones que conlleva la traducción de metáforas en letras de canciones para el doblaje. Los resultados muestran un predominio de metáforas estructurales y ontológicas, siendo las estrategias de traducción más frecuentes “misma imagen reproducida en la lengua meta” y “metáfora convertida en sentido” según Newmark (1988), y la modulación y la traducción literal según el modelo de Vinay y Darbelnet (1995).

Palabras Clave: canción, metáfora, traducción, español/inglés, Disney.

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	2
2.1 Genre	2
2.2 Audiovisual Translation	3
2.3 Figurative Language	4
2.4 Translation Techniques	5
2.5 Translation of metaphors	6
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
4. METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS	8
4.1 Materials	8
4.2 Methodology	11
5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	13
5.1 Structural metaphors	13
5.2 Orientational metaphors	19
5.3 Ontological metaphors	23
5.4 Comparative Analysis	26
6. CONCLUSION	28
7. REFERENCES	30

List of Tables

Table 1: Materials	11
Table 2: Structural metaphors	14
Table 3: Structural metaphors: quantitative data	19
Table 4: Orientational metaphors.....	20
Table 5: Orientational metaphors: quantitative data	22
Table 6: Ontological metaphors.....	23
Table 7: Ontological metaphors: quantitative data	26
Table 8: Newmark's (1988) translation procedures.....	26
Table 9: Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation techniques	27

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, audiovisual translation (AVT) has become increasingly relevant in translation studies, due to the spread of global audiovisual products and the need to adapt them to multiple linguistic and cultural contexts. In this field, the translation of songs represents one of the greatest challenges, as it requires maintaining not only the semantic content of the original text, but also its rhythm, musicality, meter and function within the narrative. This complexity becomes especially apparent in the case of Disney's musical animated films. These productions are released globally and adapted into numerous languages, and their songs play a crucial role not only in moving the plot forward but also in delivering emotionally charged and culturally rich messages. Many of these messages are conveyed through the use of conceptual metaphors, which pose unique challenges during translation. Translating these metaphors into another language often requires a thoughtful compromise between staying faithful to the original lyrics and ensuring they resonate naturally with the target audience.

This research looks into how metaphors are translated in the songs from four recent Disney films: *Encanto* (2021), *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021), *Wish* (2023) and *Moana 2* (2024), focusing on the metaphors found in their lyrics. These particular films were selected because of their rich narratives, cultural variety, and the way they use music as a central element in storytelling.

As introduced above, the purpose of this paper is to explore how metaphorical language has been handled in the Spanish dubbed versions. Metaphors in this context are not just decorative language, they shape meaning and emotion. Translating them, however, is not simple, as many figurative images depend on cultural references that may not have an equivalent in Spanish. For this reason, the study aims to compare the original and translated metaphors and to identify the most frequently used translation techniques based on metaphor type.

This study tries to answer the question of how metaphorical expressions are dealt with in the translation of Disney song lyrics, using relevant linguistic theories such as those by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). After identifying the metaphors in the ST, their translations into Spanish were analyzed in TL. This research offers insight into the choices translators make, and on how figurative language is maintained, modified or reinterpreted across languages.

In addition, this study examines the translation techniques applied, based on Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation models as well as Newmark's (1988) typology, to evaluate the strategies used to maintain both the literal meaning and musicality of the songs. Thus, this study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the translation of metaphors in song

lyrics, a field that combines the challenges of literary translation and musical adaptation. Through the analysis of recent Disney productions, it also seeks to provide insight into current trends and practices in the adaptation of global media products for Spanish-speaking audiences.

This paper is structured in seven main sections. First, the introduction presents the objectives of the study, the general context and its relevance. Next, the theoretical framework collects the fundamental concepts related to the study, such as genre, audiovisual translation, figurative language and translation techniques, with a focus on the metaphorical aspect. In the literature review, relevant research on song translation and the treatment of metaphor is examined. The methodology and materials section describes the selected data set and the steps followed to carry out this study. The results and discussion section presents the examples collected and analyzed. Next, the conclusion summarizes the most relevant findings of the study and suggests possible lines of future research. Finally, the bibliographical references used throughout the paper are included.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This theoretical framework provides the conceptual foundations needed for the analysis of this paper. It addresses relevant issues related to the subject of this study, key aspects regarding genre, audiovisual translation, figurative language, and the techniques used in the translation of metaphors. This section aims to contextualize and theoretically support the analysis applied in the study.

2.1 Genre

The concept of genre in linguistic and translation studies has been widely debated and discussed in recent decades, starting from the classical conception of genre as a textual category structured and shaped by stable and recurring communicative patterns. Authors such as Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) have emphasized its sociofunctional aspect. The concept of genre, as defined by Swales (1990), refers to a category of communicative events with common structures, purposes and expectations. Following Bhatia (1993), genre can be defined as a recognizable communicative event characterized by shared rhetorical purposes and conventional structures. While for the first one a textual genre is defined by its shared communicative purpose within a specific discursive community, the second one adds the need to consider not only the textual structure, but also the professional, cultural and contextual practices that shape it.

In this sense, the song, understood as a genre, constitutes a complex discursive element that responds to both linguistic and musical conventions, participating in established cultural practices. It combines poetic language, rhythm and melody to convey both aesthetic and communicative meaning. However, Bathia (2004) later expands that perspective by emphasizing the dynamic and hybrid nature of genre, arguing that genres frequently work across boundaries, blending with other forms of discourse. This is of particular relevance in the case of film songs, where musical, verbal and visual elements interact and work together to create meanings.

As it was stated, songs cannot be analyzed as just written texts, since it has specific characteristics that affect its translation. Although this work does not address the musical component in depth, it is important to recognize that the lyrics of a song are conceived to fit a melody, which impose certain formal restrictions that condition their translation into another language. From this perspective, the concept of “total text” proposed by Gorlée (2005), can be mentioned, based on Peirce’s vision, that songs combine several codes, such as verbal, musical, visual and emotional. Although this study focuses exclusively on the verbal component, it is necessary to bear in mind that this component does not operate in isolation in the final audiovisual product.

In summary, the song genre is characterized by its hybridity, its performative function and its multimodal nature, that directly influence the challenges of translation, especially in audiovisual contexts such as film dubbing. Therefore, understanding the theoretical and communicative dimensions of this genre is fundamental to analyze how metaphors are constructed and translated in the songs that make up the data set in this study.

2.2 Audiovisual Translation

AVT includes the translation of the visual and auditory components of media such as films, television shows, video games and songs. AVT has been the subject of much scholarly attention because of the specific challenges it presents, such as synchronization, cultural adaptation and maintaining the integrity of the source material. It is characterized by a specific set of technical and communicative constraints that condition both the product and the translation process. These restrictions mean that AVT requires a differentiated approach compared to other translation modalities.

In the context of this paper, one of the most significant aspects of AVT is the translation of songs in film productions, as it merges aspects of audiovisual, literary, and musical translation. Songs pose an added difficulty to the process of AVT, as they play a part in the film discourse.

Chaume (2012) offers an extensive analysis on dubbing, the process of replacing an original soundtrack with a translated version. He defines AVT as the process of replacing the original sound with a version in another language and describes AVT as a practice with limitations, both technical and communicative.

Technical conventions refer to the formal restrictions that allow the translated dialogue to be integrated fluidly into the audiovisual product, such as lip-sync, isochrony or visual coherence between image and sound. Although this paper does not focus on these aspects, it is important to take them into account as part of the technical context in which the translation of songs is inserted within the audiovisual. On the other hand, communicative conventions are related to naturalness and fluidity of speech in the target language with the objective to produce a dialogue that sounds spontaneous and is appropriate to the context. These conventions are particularly relevant in dubbed songs, such as naturalness of speech, register appropriateness, discourse coherence or cultural adaptation when needed. Again, this study does not evaluate these elements in depth, but they are relevant factors that indirectly influence translation decisions.

For all the above, the translation of songs in audiovisuals, as in the data set of films analyzed in this paper (*Encanto*, *Raya and The Last Drago*, *Wish* and *Moana 2*), is located in an area of special complexity within ATV. This area where image, music and text converge requires from the translators a combination of linguistic sensitivity, musical knowledge, understanding of the film context and creative ability. Thus, the analysis of the metaphors in these songs cannot be separated from the ATV framework, since they not only convey conceptual meaning, but are also deeply conditioned by the demands of the audiovisual context and the adaptation strategies it requires.

2.3 Figurative Language

Figurative language is a fundamental stylistic and cognitive resource in all artistic discourse, particularly in songs, where it plays aesthetic, rhetorical, emotional and symbolic roles. Unlike literal language, figurative language uses mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, irony or personification to express meanings that go beyond the denotative.

As stated before, figurative language has a central role in song lyrics; it helps express abstract concepts in an emotionally powerful and memorable way. Among the different types of rhetorical devices used in song lyrics, metaphors stand out for their capability to establish conceptual associations between different domains. Within the framework of cognitive linguistics, metaphors are not considered stylistic features, but fundamental mechanisms of

thought and understanding. As Charteris-Black (2004) points out, figurative language not only embellishes the text, but also structures the way we conceptualize the world. This view is found in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) cognitive theory of metaphor. They develop this approach, claiming that our conceptual system is mostly metaphorical, stating that it is a phenomenon of thought reflected in language. They argue that metaphors are universally found in everyday life and that they allowed the structuring of experience (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). They explained that the essence of metaphors was to understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another. According to their theory, metaphors involve a projection or conceptual mapping from a source domain (more concrete and familiar) to a target domain (more abstract), which allows us to understand and communicate more complex ideas through tangible experiences.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) propose a classification of metaphors into three broad types: structural metaphors, orientational metaphors and ontological metaphors:

- Structural metaphors are the ones in which a concept is organized in terms of another, more concrete and organized, for example ARGUMENT IS WAR.
- Orientational metaphors are the ones that organize concepts in relation to spatial orientation, for example, HAPPY IS UP or BAD IS DOWN.
- Ontological metaphors are the ones where abstract entities or processes are conceived of as objects, containers or substances, for example THE MIND IS A CONTAINER.

2.4 Translation Techniques

The concept of translation technique refers to the specific procedures employed by translators to resolve problems during the translation process. In the context of musical audiovisual translation, these techniques become particularly important, since translators have to deal with different restrictions, such as lip synchrony, rhythmic and musical adequacy, the naturalness of the translated version, or the preservation of both semantic and figurative content.

One of the most influential theoretical frameworks for the study of translation techniques is the one proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), who identifies seven different procedures: borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. This classification has been widely used in translation studies, including audiovisual contexts, and remains a fundamental reference for its possibility of being applied to different levels of analysis and for its theoretical flexibility. In the context of this study, we have chosen to use this classification because it allows us to analyze metaphor translations from a broader perspective. Moreover, its applicability to different textual units is especially useful in the translation of songs.

2.5 Translation of metaphors

The translation of metaphors constitutes one of the greatest challenges in the field of translation, not only because of their symbolic and semantic charge, but also because of their dependence on the cultural context, of both the Source Text (ST) and the Translation Text (TT). As Newmark (1988) points out, “whilst the central problem of translation is the overall choice of a translation method for a text, the most important particular problem is the translation of metaphor” (p. 104).

In the context of ATV and, more specifically, song translation, this complexity is intensified by metrical, rhythmic and melodic restrictions. Translators are faced with constant decisions, evaluating whether to preserve the original metaphorical image, adapt it to the target cultural context, or replace it with an equivalent expression in the target language.

Newmark (1988), describes various strategies for translating metaphors, which can be grouped into a few fundamental procedures: keeping the same metaphorical image in the TL, substituting it with an equivalent or similar metaphor familiar to the target culture, converting the metaphor into its literal sense by paraphrasing, and omitting it altogether when it cannot be transferred effectively.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several authors have addressed the challenges of song translation, highlighting that it involves more than simply conveying meaning. Instead, it requires a balance between lyrics and musical elements.

Specialized databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR or Scopus were consulted, using keywords such as “audiovisual translation”, “song translation”, “translation of metaphors” and “Disney translation”. The examination of studies on these topics helped to determine the objectives of the work and which elements should be considered during the analysis section.

This paper is situated at the intersection between studies on the translation of metaphors and studies on the translation of songs. Although both fields have been widely addressed, the fact is that few studies were found that specifically dealt with the translation of metaphors in songs, which is an academic gap to which this paper intends to contribute.

On one hand, authors such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) propose the conceptual classification of metaphors discussed in the section 2.3 (Figurative Language), and from another perspective, Newmark (1988) offers a more applied approach, classifying metaphors and proposing the

specific procedures for their translation discussed in the section 2.5 (Translation of metaphors). Although both approaches have been used to analyze literary or journalistic texts, they are also useful in the analysis of the figurative language present in songs.

Translating songs, especially in the context of Disney films, requires a combination of linguistic, musical and cultural knowledge. As Low (2008) argues, “translation is a complex activity, and the devising of singable texts is more difficult than most translating tasks” (p. 2). He also explains how it involves more than just linguistic transfer, requiring a sensitivity to rhythm, rhyme, and musicality.

Regarding the translation of songs, studies such as those by Low (2005), Delabastita (2004) and Frazon (2008) have addressed the difficulties involved in translating musical lyrics into another language.

Low (2005), in particular, proposes the pentathlon principle, which considers five fundamental criteria regarding song translation: sense, naturalness, rhythm, rhyme and sing ability. This model has been widely cited in studies regarding song translation, as it helps evaluate the priorities and compromises that the translator should try to balance. Delabastita (2004) adds that in texts that are going to be performed, like songs, phonetic and prosodic restrictions have a bigger weight than other genres, which could justify some modifications and deviations from the original content.

As Franzon (2008) explains, a song should be understood as a unit in which music and lyrics interact dynamically, and where any modification in one of the elements may require changes in the other. This view reinforces the idea that translating a song is not a linear linguistic transfer, but a process of creative negotiation between multiple semiotic components. He also suggests that, when facing such demands, the translator can choose different strategies: translating only the content, translating the lyrics in a way that they could be sung (singable translation), or creating a completely new version that accomplishes a similar function (functionally equivalent adaptation).

For her part, Susam-Sarajeva (2008) points out, recent studies on song translation have shifted their focus from “why” to “how”. She explains how most of the studies were centered on the reasons for translating songs, and there has been a change in current approaches that study the more complex and practical question of how they are translated in different contexts. This functional shift has led scholars to pay more attention to external factors such as who will sing the translated version, who the audience will be, or where it will be broadcasted, such as CDs, television, radio, digital platforms, etc. These questions seem to be endless, but they reveal the

complex decision-making process behind song translation and highlight the importance of context, purpose and interpreting conditions. This broader perspective is consistent with the multimodal and multidisciplinary nature of audiovisual translation, especially when songs are embedded in narrative and musical structures, as it is in this case of animated films.

Despite these advances, the works that specifically discuss and analyze how metaphors are translated in the context of songs are still very limited. This limited number of studies help justify the relevance of this study, which aims to analyze the translation behavior of metaphors in Disney film songs from a dual perspective. Through this approach, we seek to provide data and empirical reflections that will serve as a basis for future research in this field of study.

4. METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

4.1 Materials

This section presents the songs from the selected films, which will be analyzed to examine the English to Spanish translations and their impact on the narrative and characters. After an exhaustive research, and in order to carry out the analysis, the selection of the data set was made. Numerous songs from Disney films containing significant cultural references and rich in metaphors were considered. It was finally reduced to a total of 4 films and 8 songs, selected by criteria including the existence of official versions dubbed into Spanish in Spain, the popularity of the films, the date of release, the cultural relevance of the songs and the existence of elements that might present difficulties for translators. The aim was to collect a representative data set that would allow us to observe how metaphors are dealt with in the musical translation process.

The songs chosen show important times in each movie, and through their words we can look at the ideas, feelings, and bonds that grow during the tale. They are picked not just because of their value to the storyline, but also due to the richness of their words which have been changed to suit different language and cultural settings in the Spanish versions.

The films and the songs selected are:

- *Encanto* (2021): *Surface Pressure, We Don't Talk About Bruno, All of You*
- *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021): *Lead the Way*
- *Wish* (2023): *The Wish, Knowing What I Know Now*
- *Moana 2* (2024): *Beyond, Get Lost*

Each of these songs, their context within the films, and their impact on the characters are described below.

The film *Encanto* follows the Madrigal family, a magical member's family residing in a small village in Colombia. Every family member has a special gift, except Mirabel, the main character who feels out of place and different. The story is about her struggle to save her home and find out what magic and family are actually all about.

The first song selected from this film is *Surface Pressure*. It tells the story of Mirabel's older sister and how she feels about her gift of superhuman strength. She is overwhelmed by the expectations placed upon her, using the song to reveal her vulnerability and the emotional burden of always rising to the occasion. The lyrics express her frustration and exhaustion. The second song, *We Don't Talk About Bruno*, is sung at a crucial moment when Mirabel tries to understand more about her mysterious uncle, Bruno, who has been banished from the family because of his visions and predictions. During the song, the family tells their side of the story, afraid to talk about Bruno because of what he represents. The song functions as a kind of taboo on the figure of Bruno. The lyrics express fear and uncertainty. For Mirabel, this song marks a turning point in her search for the truth. The third song from this film is *All of You*, this is the final song of *Encanto*. It is sung at the climax of the film when the family comes together to rebuild the house and come to terms with their gifts, flaws and vulnerabilities. This song occurs after their house is destroyed and the family realizes that what really matters is love and family unity. After all the internal and external conflicts the family has faced, the song serves as an expression of mutual acceptance.

The second film is *Raya and the Last Dragon*. This story is set in Kumandra, where the land is divided in tribes, each of which represents a part of a dragon. Thousands of years ago, dragons protected mankind from an evil force known as the Drunn, dark creatures that turn people to stone. Raya, the heroine, sets out on a journey to find the last dragon, Sisu, she wants to destroy the Drunn and restore peace among the tribes. The song *Lead the Way* does not appear in any scene of the film, instead it is played during the end credits, marking the closing of Raya's story. The song reflects the emotional journey of Raya, who learns to trust others and unite the tribes to save her world. The lyrics of this song reinforce the message of unity and trust.

The third film is *Wish*, it follows the life of Asha, a young girl that lives in the magic reign of Rosas, where wishes are granted by King Magnifico. The story begins when Asha makes a deep wish to change her world, but when it is not fulfilled as she had hoped, she embarks on a journey to discover that wishes are not always granted directly.

The first song selected from this film is *The Wish*. This song happens when Asha expresses her great wish of changing the destiny and future of her world and improving the lives of her

community and it marks the beginning of her adventure. Asha firmly believes in the power of wishes and that magic can transform reality. The lyrics help us to understand the main character, her beliefs, qualities, feelings and thoughts. The second song is *Knowing What I Know Now*. It plays a crucial role in the plot and character development. It is an anthem of empowerment, revelation and struggle. It is sung by Asha and other characters in the film, as a way of reflecting on all that they have discovered during their journey, as well as making a collective decision to rebel against the injustice they have experienced. The song symbolizes a point of transformation for the characters, especially for Asha, who goes from a person who blindly trusted the promises of others to someone who understands the importance of fighting for what is right.

The last film selected is *Moana 2*. This film is a sequel that continues the story of Moana. In this movie she reunites with Maui, the demigod she met on her ocean adventure. This time, she also must embark on an ocean voyage to help her village and her people.

The first song selected from this film is *Beyond*. The main character sings this song after a call from her ancestors. She feels like she has to leave on another journey, longer and more dangerous than the last one, leaving her family behind. She thinks it is her destiny to do so. The song serves to express her feelings, how hard it is to say goodbye, but the importance of doing so in order to save her people. The last song from this film is *Get lost*, this song is performed by Matangi. This character appears to be mean and bad in the beginning, but when the main character meets her and sings this song to her, we realize that she was just following orders. She explains through the song that she just feels trapped and she is not happy serving Nalo, the God they are trying to defeat. The following table shows the materials, both film and song, their release date and word count in the original version and the translated one.

Film	Song Title (English)	Song Title (Spanish)	Release Date	Word Count (English)	Word Count (Spanish)
a. <i>Encanto</i>	Surface Pressure	En lo profundo	2021	469	362
	We don't talk about Bruno	No se habla de Bruno		426	346
	All of you	Solo tú		543	402
b. <i>Raya and the last dragon</i>	Lead the way	Hasta vencer	2021	260	185
c. <i>Wish</i>	The wish	Mi deseo	2023	357	267
	Knowing what I know now	Esa es la verdad		407	261

<i>d. Moana 2</i>	Beyond	Al final	2024	328	286
	Get lost	Piérdete		312	240

Table 1: Materials

4.2 Methodology

In relation to the methodology employed, since the subject of the study could be realized following different procedures, various authors were studied and considered. Once the objective of the paper was established, which was to examine how the metaphors present in the selected songs have been translated and what translation techniques have been applied in each case.

Several authors and procedures were examined, Peter Newmark's (1988) metaphor classification, and his translations methods were considered in an initial phase of the project. He distinguishes between dead, cliché, stock, adapted, recent and original metaphors. However, after reviewing the progress of the analysis, it was decided to focus the classification exclusively on the cognitive model of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), as it was considered more consistent with the objectives of the study and more appropriate to address the conceptual and systematic approach proposed in this work. Although Newmark's categorization, of a more stylistic and textual nature, was considered less relevant in this context, his translation methods developed specifically for metaphors were employed. Additionally, Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) model of translation procedures guided this research in terms of identifying translation techniques and evaluating those choices.

First, the conceptual framework of analysis was established, we proceeded to select the songs for the data set, taking these criteria into account: the existence of official versions dubbed into Spanish in Spain, the popularity of the films, the date of release, the cultural relevance of the songs and the existence of elements that might present difficulties for translators. Detailed information on the process and materials is included in the previous section (4.1. Materials).

Once we have selected the films and songs that will be the subject of our analysis, the data set gathered, including both the original English lyrics and the official translated Spanish versions, was organized it in verse-for-verse parallel tables, to allow a better comparative analysis.

Then, verse-for-verse parallel tables were completed, the next step was the first part of the analysis. This initial analysis focused on the identification and classification of each metaphor found in the original songs, and the examination and study of the techniques used in their translation. In terms of translation techniques, they were first studied to facilitate the

classification of the examples found in the lyrics. Metaphors were categorized and later analyzed to determine whether they were maintained, adapted, neutralized or eliminated in the translated version. Using the theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors were identified by analyzing expressions that framed abstract concepts onto concrete domains.

Finally, metaphors were identified and classified, the results were organized in comparative tables that included each metaphor in their original version, their Spanish translation, their classification and the translation strategy employed. At this point, the metaphors were organized into three main groups, following Lakoff and Johnson's classification: structural, orientational and ontological metaphors. For each of these types of metaphors, tables such as the following were created to compare both versions, verse for verse. The tables include each metaphor numbered, and preceded by a letter (a, b, c, d) depending on which film they belong to: a) *Encanto*, b) *Raya and The Last Dragon*, c) *Wish* and d) *Moana 2*.

Original English Version (ST)	Translated Spanish Version (TT)	Newmark	Vinay and Darbelnet

In the first column we find the ST, which are the original English metaphors. The second column reflects the TT, which are the translated Spanish metaphors. The third and fourth column contain the translations methods according to Newmark, and the translations techniques according to Vinay and Darbelnet.

The next step was the analysis of data. This analysis focused on the translation choices made in each metaphor, taking into account both Newmark's and Vinay and Darbelnet's approaches. Although Newmark (1988) originally proposed seven strategies for metaphor translation, this study adopts a simplified classification into four main categories to facilitate analysis.

The analysis was qualitative in nature, looking at meaning, context and interpretation. It focused on how specific metaphors were translated and the impact they have, why a cultural reference was adapted or not, or what semantic or emotional changes happen when translating a song. This has allowed us to interpret the translators' decisions. But also, quantitative observations were included to reinforce results. This approach consisted of counting the number of metaphors present in the selected songs, as well as the classification of the translation techniques used in each case. The ratio of each one was also calculated to get a percentage that better reflects the data obtained after the analysis. Graphics were created to show the results more clearly.

This information has been compiled at the end of each section in tables as the following.

Newmark	Total number (%)	Vinay & Darbelnet	Total number (%)
Same image		Literal	
Replaced		Borrowing	
Converted into sense		Transposition	
Deleted		Modulation	
		Calque	
		Equivalence	
		Adaptation	
Total		Total	

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section contains an exhaustive analysis of the metaphors found in the songs selected from the movies *Encanto* (2021), *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021), *Wish* (2023), and *Moana 2* (2025). Metaphors have first been classified following the conceptual model by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), adapted for translation purposes. Then, the translation techniques applied to each metaphor have also been analyzed according to both Newmark's (1988) and Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) models.

Metaphors were identified after a thorough analysis of the original English lyrics and their official Spanish translations. Bilingual comparative tables were created, placing each English verse next to its corresponding Spanish verse. In total, 39 metaphors were identified.

Each metaphor has been included in the tables with the following information: original verse, translated verse, translation technique according to Newmark and translation procedure according to Vinay and Darbelnet.

Considering that the classification used in the analysis has been based on the division into three groups of metaphor types, this section is divided accordingly.

5.1 Structural metaphors

Structural metaphors allow us to understand a certain concept in terms of another, such as abstract experiences through physical or narrative frames. These types of metaphors were common in songs from *Encanto* and *Wish*, where abstracts concepts like hope, responsibility or fate were constructed through physical images.

The following table presents the 16 structural metaphors identified in the data set.

	Original English Version (ST)	Translated Spanish Version (TT)	Newmark	Vinay et al.
1a	Pressure like a drip, drip, drip that'll never stop	Peso que con gota a gota lo reventó	Same image	Literal
2a	Pressure like a tick, tick, tick till it's ready to blow	Peso como un tick, tack, tick antes de una explosión	Same image	Literal
3a	Diamonds and platinum, I find 'em, I flatten 'em	Rocas, diamantes, se funden se parten	Converted into sense	Modulation
4a	Give her all the heavy things we can't shoulder	Todas las tareas que no aguantamos	Converted into sense	Modulation
5a	That breaks the camel's back.	Se va a desmoronar.	Converted into sense	Modulation
6a	What breaks the camel's back.	Comienza a derrumbarse	Converted into sense	Modulation
7a	The ship doesn't swerve as it heard how big the iceberg is	El barco no vira, aún sabiendo el riesgo rotundo	Converted into sense	Modulation
8a	Line up the dominoes, a light wind blows	Levanto el dominó en alineación	Same image	Literal
9a	You try to stop it tumbling, but on and on it goes	Y el viento resoplando lo derriba sin control	Same image	Literal
10b	Love is a bridge	Tenemos lazos	Replaced	Modulation
11c	His true color in shades of green	Oculto su apetito de poder	Converted into sense	Modulation
12c	Throw caution to every warning sign	Las señales veré con sensatez	Converted into sense	Modulation
13c	A revolution hit the ground	La gran revolución se aproxima	Converted into sense	Modulation
14c	Isn't truth supposed to set you free?	Si el saber supone libertad	Same image	Modulation
15c	Why do I feel so weighed down by it? (Ontological)	¿Por qué si respiro el aire enfría?	Replaced	Adapt. + Equivalence
16d	Now will this life I've worked so hard for come undone?	Lo que he creado se podría derrumbar	Same image	Modulation

Table 2: Structural metaphors

As we can observe in the table, in the first film, *Encanto*, nine structural metaphors were found. Some clear examples appear in the song *Surface Pressure*. The metaphor [1a] creates an image that combines the concept of emotional pressure with the physical metaphor of constant dripping. It produces a feeling of gradual accumulation and psychological drain. In Spanish, it is translated as “presión que no para de gotear”, preserving the metaphorical essence. The decision to use a literal translation is probably based on several factors. Firstly, the metaphor works in both languages without the need for cultural adaptation, and secondly the translation

maintains the repetitive rhythm that suggests anxiety while also fitting phonetically in the music beat. In addition, the image of “dripping” as a psychological weight used in the song is sufficiently universal that no modulation should be needed when translating to other languages. According to Newmark (1988), literal translation is preferable when the metaphor is understandable and effective in the TL, which is the case in this example.

A similar case is the metaphor [2a], found in the same song. In this example, the internal and emotional pressure is represented through an analogy comparing it to a countdown mechanism, like a bomb or a clock. It is classified and translated following the same path as the previous example.

A particularly interesting detail in these two similar metaphors is the treatment of onomatopoeia. In “tick, tick, tick”, the translation adapted it to the most natural form in Spanish by changing the vowel “i” to “a” in the second tick, leaving it to “tick-tack”. This phonetic change, although apparently minimal, reflects a cultural micro adaptation that maintains the rhythm and the expressive function of the original verse. In contrast, in “drip, drip, drip”, the sound repetition has been completely suppressed in the translation “gota a gota”. This decision probably is due to the difficulty of translating the English monosyllable effectively into Spanish to create the same rhythmic effect, since there is no equivalent short onomatopoeia, and the literal repetition of “gota, gota, gota” would sound forced.

From the same film, we find example [3a], where the structural metaphor compares the character's emotional strength to the ability to crush hard material like diamonds and platinum. In the Spanish translation “Rocas, diamantes, se funden se parten”, a metaphorical paraphrase is chosen in which the agent “I” is omitted, so the original action is reformulated to probably adapt it to the rhythm. This strategy corresponds to the technique of “metaphor converted into sense” (Newmark, 1988) and to the modulation procedure (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995), since the point of view is modified and the narrative emphasis is changed.

It is important to note that, although in the narrative universe of the film *Encanto*, the character possesses superhuman strength and could technically perform these actions literally, which could call into question the existence of metaphor, but a thorough analysis reveals that the sequence continues to function as a structural metaphor in the sense defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The physical act of destroying impossible materials is used as a vehicle to express emotional charge, family pressure and psychological fragility. The literalness within the fiction does not negate the metaphorical aspect; rather, it probably enriches and reinforces it, especially in the emotional context of the song.

Continuing with the same song and character, the original English metaphor [4a] employs also a structural metaphor according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), where responsibilities or emotional burdens are conceptualized as physical weight that must be carried on the shoulders. The translation into Spanish, however, rendered as “Todas las tareas que no aguantamos”, results in a loss of evocative power. The visual image of weight and physical burden is not fully maintained; instead, the translation opts for a paraphrase (according to Newmark), which means that an important part of the figurative component is eliminated. In addition, the modulation applied in the Spanish translation changes in a way the point of view. In English the emphasis is on the physical element, her not being able to carry the weight, while in Spanish it is presented from a more emotional approach, not that much as physical, but as tasks she can't endure. This change in the point of view implies that the translation loses visual strength and precision but maybe gains in emotion.

Another example from this song is metaphor [5a], immediately repeated at [6a]. This structural metaphor conceptualizes emotional and mental collapse as a physical body that breaks after an excessive load. The image of the camel shows the accumulated pressure through a concrete and visual scene. This metaphor contains a figurative image widely recognized in the English language. However, this image has no meaning in Spanish, and its literal translation would not guarantee comprehension. Although there is an expression with a very similar meaning that could have been an option, “la gota que colmó el vaso”, it was not used in the translation. It was probably avoided for metrical and tonal reasons, which resulted in a more direct rephrasing been chosen. Both translations “Se va a desmoronar” and “Comienza a derrumbarse” convey the emotional effect of the original metaphor, even though the visual is lost.

Two interesting cases were identified in the verses [7a] and [8a], the English metaphors “The ship doesn't swerve as it heard how big the iceberg is” and “Line up the dominoes, a light wind blows”. Both examples share a similar conceptual structure, presenting physical images of danger and collapse as a symbolic representation of contained psychological and emotional pressure. The first one reflects refusal to act upon danger; it represents a mix of denial and surrender through the image of the ship that does not turn despite knowing it is approaching an iceberg. While in the second one, the domino pieces suggest an accumulated vulnerability where the slightest thing can trigger a collapse. Both are structural metaphors, where abstracts concepts are shown through highly visual physical scenes. However, in their Spanish translation, both images suffer a slight metaphorical weakening. For the first one, “El barco no vira, aun sabiendo el riesgo rotundo” retains part of the sense of the metaphor in the first half,

but eliminates the explicit reference of the iceberg, which is specifically the visual core of the original metaphor.

In the same way, when reading the first verse in Spanish, “Levanto el dominó en alineación” it looks like it adopts a more vague reformulation of the metaphor, and eliminates the dynamic image of the wind knocking down the pieces, and again, the outcome and central imagery of the original metaphor would be lost. But as we continue reading, the following metaphor, [9a], “You try to stop it tumbling, but on and on it goes”, translated as “Y el viento resoplando lo derriba sin control”, reveals that the metaphor is indeed preserved as a whole, although distributed across two verses. While the first line alone does not yet convey the full image, the second introduces the element of the wind and completes the original metaphor. This is the reason why these two lines (8a and 9a) have been grouped together and analyzed jointly; otherwise, the classification would change significantly.

Therefore, in the first example the figurative component is reduced, although the syntactic structure is maintained, but the expressive and conceptual value of the original image is diluted, losing part of the poetics impact it had in English. The second example maintains the same image and uses literal translation when analyzing both verses together.

These adaptations and rearrangements made in the Spanish translated version may be due to metrical or rhythmic constraints, but they also reflect a translation strategy that prioritizes clarity and musicality over symbolic complexity, at the expense of partially impoverishing the metaphorical value of the source text.

From the film *Raya*, we find verse [10b], that conceptualizes love as a structure that connects people, overcoming obstacles and distances. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), this is a structural metaphor where the idea of an affective relationship is constructed through the conceptual framework of the bridge as a connector between extremes. In the Spanish version, “tenemos lazos”, the image of the bridge is fully replaced by a different one. It also represents union, but with a different visual element, such as bond or link. Although the idea of emotional connection is maintained, a metaphor has been replaced by another, therefore the technique according to Newmark would be metaphor replaced by a TL standard metaphor, and the procedure of Vinay and Darbelnet is modulation, since it changes the conceptual frame of the original metaphor.

From the film *Wish*, we find several structural metaphors. In both songs, *The Wish* and *Knowing What I Know Now*, the themes that are addressed and the concepts that are named are closely linked to the worlds of abstract domains, such as truth, freedom, hope, power and fear. Since these ideas are difficult to represent directly, it raises the appearance of metaphors to

facilitate their visualization and understanding by the viewer. Among the examples present in this film, verses containing structural metaphors are [11c], [12c], and [13c].

The first one, [11c], translated as “Ocultas el apetito de poder”, represents the true intentions of the character through a visual system. The color green is associated with greed or envy, particularly in Western culture. This connection derives from expressions such as “green with envy” and the symbolic link between the color of money and material desire. However, the Spanish version eliminates the visual image of color and replaces it with an explicit paraphrase of the implied meaning which, according to Newmark (1988), corresponds to the technique of converting the metaphor to sense (paraphrasing the meaning) and, from the point of view of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), to a modulation.

The same case applies to the second metaphor, [12c], “Throw caution to every warning sign”, translated as “I will see the signs sensibly”, it transforms the image of caution as an object that can be thrown into a more neutral expression that only highlights the act of observing the signs.

In the third example, [13c], the abstract concept of revolution is presented as a moving body hitting the ground, reinforcing the idea of a sudden and forceful change. As with the previous examples, the metaphor is converted into meaning by paraphrase, following Newmark’s (1988) classification, and therefore the expressive force is lost in the translation. In the Spanish verse, “La gran revolución se aproxima”, we observe how the image is softened, and the dynamism is replaced by a more neutral phrase.

In all three examples, we can observe how the translation prioritizes clarity and cultural appropriateness over maintaining the figurative images of the ST.

A particularly interesting part from this song, is the very beginning, in the first two connected verses, [14c] and [15c], which in English state: “Isn't truth supposed to set you free? Why do I feel so weighed down by it?”. While only the first one can be classified as a structural metaphor according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), but due to their connection, it was decided that it would be more interesting to analyze them together.

These two lines presented two consecutive questions in the ST, they were connected in a conceptual level, the first verse presents the expectation of the truth as freeing force (structural metaphor), while the second one expressed the contradictory feeling of the truth as a weight (ontological metaphor). However, in the Spanish translation “Si el saber supone libertad, ¿por qué si respiro el aire enfía?”, there is a significant change in both form and metaphorical content. On the one hand, the translation has joined the two original questions into a single

interrogative structure, transforming the first verse into a conditional statement that introduces the question of the second verse. On the other hand, the word “truth” is replaced with the word “knowledge”, and the phrase “weighed down” disappears. There is a shift in the metaphorical domain, so the truth and the knowledge ceases to be conceptualized as a weight that oppresses and instead is linked to an air that cools, replacing the image of burden created by the original metaphor in English, and creating a new image in Spanish, one of a hostile atmosphere.

In the film *Moana 2*, we find the last structural metaphor, [16d], which structures life as a physical construction. The verb “come undone” implies undoing something elaborate, and the translation “podría derrumbarse” maintains that image and the visual strength that comes with it. The procedure is a subtle modulation in the choice of verb, “collapse” (derrumbarse) instead of “undo” (deshacerse).

To conclude this section, the table below presents the numerical data corresponding to the structural metaphors.

Newmark	Total number (%)	Vinay & Darbelnet	Total number (%)
Same image	6 (37.5%)	Literal	4 (25%)
Replaced	2 (12.5%)	Borrowing	0 (0%)
Converted into sense	8 (50%)	Transposition	0 (0%)
Deleted	0 (0%)	Modulation	11 (68.7%)
		Calque	0 (%)
		Equivalence	0 (0%)
		Adaptation	1 (6.25%)
Total	16 (100%)	Total	16 (100%)

Table 3: Structural metaphors: quantitative data

5.2 Orientational metaphors

Orientational metaphors rely on spatial schemes to function. In this corpus, they usually represent terms like progress, confusion, overcoming, etc. They are most frequent in songs from *Moana 2* and *Raya and the Last Dragon*, where the sense of direction, journey and inner balance play a central role in the narrative.

The following table lists the 8 orientational metaphors identified in our data set.

	Original English Version (ST)	Translated Spanish Version (TT)	Newmark	Vinay et al.
1a	When he calls your name, it all fades to black	Al oír tu nombre no hay marcha atrás	Converted into sense	Modulation
2b	When we bring the light to the dark	Algo enciende en mi interior	Same image	Literal + Modulation
3b	You'll see that, we'll lead the way	Confía, hasta vencer	Replaced	Modulation
4c	If knowing what it could be is what drives me	Si llama el porvenir hacia delante	Same image	Modulation
5d	'Cause on the edge, it's all about living bold and free	Porque al final todo esto va de vivir a mil	Replaced	Modulation
6d	Get lost, cut loose, and lose your way	Te has de perder, lanzar, caer	Same image	Literal + Transposition
7d	Just fading, wading through the fears	Inmersa en esta oscuridad	Converted into sense	Modulation
8d	Winds have changed, tides turn me far away from shore	Las mareas hoy me arrastran la razón	Same image	Literal + Modulation

Table 4: Orientational metaphors

From the film *Encanto*, example [1a] presents an image that associates darkness with danger, loss of control and fear, based on the conceptual schema by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) BAD IS DARK or LOSS OF CONTROL IS DARKNESS.

In the Spanish translation “no hay marcha atrás”, the metaphor is replaced by an idiomatic expression that conveys irreversibility, but the visual image of darkness is lost. According to Newmark's (1988) framework, this is a case of “converting the metaphor into sense”, and from the perspective of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), it applies a modulation process, as the sense is adapted to the target language context with a change of the conceptual framing, from a symbolic blackout sense to a direct reference to the character's fate.

From the film *Raya and the Last Dragon*, the verses [2b] and [3b] are constructed from orientational metaphors, as they represent emotional or ethical processes through spatial frameworks, following the schema PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980)

In the first case, the conceptual opposition of “light” and “dark” (good and bad) projects a transformation of the situation using the act of illumination. In the second, the metaphor presents purposes as destinations; the act of guiding represents leadership and collective direction toward a goal or destination (probably linked with destiny and fate).

Focusing on translation techniques, in the first case [2b], the Spanish translation “Algo enciende el interior” a partial reproduction of the original image is observed, maintaining the central idea of “light”, but shifting the focus towards a more emotional and personal aspect (using the word “interior”). Therefore combining a literal translation with a modulation according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and adapting the metaphor to the reference system of the TT, but keeping the same image, according to Newmark (1988). In contrast, [3b] “Confía, hasta vencer” totally replaces the original image, the metaphor of leadership as spatial direction is removed, changing it to one of resilience. Here the technique of metaphor is replaced by a standard TL metaphor, accompanied by a modulation, has been applied.

From the film *Wish*, example [4c], again following the schema PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), conceptualizes motivation as a force that moves the character forward.

In the Spanish translation, “Si llama el porvenir hacia delante”, the spatial orientation is preserved but with a slightly different approach. In this version, the future is not pushing but calling. It changes the point of view from the internal action (pushing) to the external one (calling), but it does not alter the metaphorical sense. Therefore, from the perspective of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), the translation technique used is modulation. Since the message is maintained, according to Newmark (1988), the procedure applied is the same image reproduced in the TL.

Most of the examples of orientational metaphors were found in the song *Get Lost* from the film *Moana 2*.

The first metaphor, [5d], places the character in a position of limit or edge, associated with the intensity of living without fear. It projects an emotional idea in a physical space (“living on the edge” and “being on the edge”). In the translation chosen, “vivir a mil”, this image is replaced by another common expression in Spanish to refer to living intensely, maintaining the meaning with a different metaphor. Therefore, according to Newmark (1988), the procedure applied is the metaphor is replaced by a standard TL metaphor, and a modulation according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995).

The second one, [6d], represents the abandonment of control, being open to the unknown and personal freedom. The Spanish translation, using the verbs “perder”, “lanzar” and “caer”, maintains the sequence of spatial images adapting the structure grammatically. The translation procedure following Newmark (1988) is maintaining the same image in the TL, while according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) it would be a literal translation with transposition.

The third example, [7d], represents fear as a physical entity in which the character moves slowly, immersed in a dense, threatening environment. The translation to “inmersa en esta oscuridad” maintains the image of being inside this “entity” but replacing fear with darkness and eliminating the figurative movement of the original.

While the three metaphors share a conceptual base of an orientational type, their translations differ according to their level of concreteness and expressiveness. While the first one replaces the original image with a metaphor established in the TL, the second maintains the original metaphor by means of a literal reproduction with little loss. The third, on the other hand, presents a more original image as the translation offers a more general statement, converting the original metaphor into sense.

Lastly, the last example is found in the song *Beyond* from the same film. Metaphor [8d] uses movement as a representation of losing control, stability or even identity, especially the image of being away from a safe place (the shore) implying loss of security. In the original, the shifting wind and tides can be associated with a loss of direction, and the translation “Las mareas hoy me arrastran la razón” follows this idea, but the emotional effect is intensified by incorporating reason as an object that can be dragged. So, the base image is preserved, but with a slight variation that could be seen as a lexical modulation, therefore, according to Newmark the technique of “the same image is reproduced in the TL” is applied, and according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) the procedure corresponds to a mixture of literal translation with expressive modulations that reinforces the metaphorical impact in Spanish.

The following table presents the numerical data corresponding to the orientational metaphors.

Newmark	Total number (%)	Vinay & Darbelnet	Total number (%)
Same image	4 (50%)	Literal	3 (37.5%)
Replaced	2 (25%)	Borrowing	0 (0%)
Converted into sense	2 (25%)	Transposition	0 (0%)
Deleted	0 (0%)	Modulation	5 (62.5%)
		Calque	0 (0%)
		Equivalence	0 (0%)
		Adaptation	0 (0%)
Total	8 (100%)	Total	8 (100%)

Table 5: Orientational metaphors: quantitative data

5.3 Ontological metaphors

Ontological metaphors conceptualize abstract ideas as physical objects or entities, facilitating their understanding and expression in song lyrics. These metaphors were found mostly in the films *Encanto* and *Wish*.

The following table details the 15 ontological metaphors identified in the songs, organized by film and classified according to their translation technique, following both Newmark's and Vinay and Darbelnet's theoretical frameworks.

	Original English Version (ST)	Translated Spanish Version (TT)	Newmark	Vinay et al.
1a	Got a rough, indestructible surface	Mi coraza es del hierro más duro	Same image	Literal
2a	Watch as she buckles and bends, but never breaks	Verla dibrarse y torcerse sin chispar	Converted into sense	Modulation
3a	If I could shake the crushing weight of expectations	¿Podré desvanecer el peso cruel, la expectativa?	Converted into sense	Modulation
4a	Your fate is sealed when your prophecy is read	Las profecías se cumplen cada vez	Converted into sense	Modulation
5a	In doing so, he floods my brain	Sabrás que lo tomé muy mal	Converted into sense	Modulation
6a	He sees your dreams and feasts on you screams	Gritas mientras tiemblas al despertar	Converted into sense	Modulation
7a	Look at this family, a glowing constellation.	Y esta familia, constelación que estalla.	Same image	Literal
8a	So full of stars and everybody wants to shine.	Esperará su momento de brillar.	Same image	Literal
9b	When you're broken, open up your heart and feel	No te encuentras solo, ábrete a sentir	Converted into sense	Modulation
10c	Expand your mind to see	Tu mente has de expandir	Same image	Literal
11c	Now I've got all this freedom in my bones	Hoy libero tanto espacio en mi interior	Same image	Literal + Modulation
12c	But I've still got the lid on, so it doesn't overflow	Mas cubro y guardo al corazón lo pongo en contención	Same image	Literal + Modulation
13c	The rules are ours to break	Tu rol has de romper	Converted into sense	Modulation
14d	Now new skies call me by name	Desconozco esta señal	Deleted	Modulation
15d	There is destiny in motion	El destino ya está en marcha	Same image	Literal

Table 6: Ontological metaphors

From the film *Encanto*, a few examples are found in the song *Surface Pressure*. Metaphors [1a], [2a] and [3a] are identified as ontological metaphors. The first one describes emotional strength through the image of a resistant and unbreakable surface; similarly, the second does

so with emotional resistance, comparing it to the flexibility of a physical object under pressure, and the last conceptualizes social expectations as a physical weight. They rely on conventional images, such as emotional shielding, pressure and resilience.

However, their translation process differs, the first one [1a] is preserved almost literally in Spanish, making use of the same metaphor reproduced in the TL (Newmark, 1988) and in literal translation (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995), due to the existence of the same metaphor in the target language, Spanish. In contrast, the other two [2a] and [3a] are translated using the metaphor converted into sense or meaning, softening and reformulating the imagery to prioritize clarity, which also implies the use of modulation in Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) terms.

From the same film, in the song *We Don't Talk About Bruno*, we find three more ontological metaphors, [4a], [5a] and [6a], that conceptualize abstract concepts such as fate, fear and feelings. However, their degree of conventionality varies, while the first one ("your fate is sealed") can be considered a stock metaphor, the other two amply with a more creative imagery.

In terms of translation techniques, all three have been handled as per the treatment given to the metaphor converted into sense/paraphrase one implying the loss of original metaphorical charge. Viewing from Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), they have been translated by modulation for here the focus of message is changed and substituted the metaphorical image with an emotionally equivalent reformulation. These choices reveal an explicit inclination towards prioritizing expressive naturalness in the target language over maintaining original imagery.

The last ontological metaphors from this film are found in the consecutive verses [7a] and [8a], and are analyzed together, since the second line extends and reinforces the metaphorical image of the first one. These metaphors conceptualized the family as a concrete physical entity (a constellation), whose members are represented as individual stars with the desire to shine (to stand out and be valued). The translation technique applied corresponds to the same metaphor reproduced in the TL according to Newmark (1988), and literal translation according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). This is because the Spanish translation faithfully maintains the metaphorical structure and the symbolic elements of the original.

The next example, found in the film *Raya and the Last Dragon*, is verse [9b], which presents the character and her emotional integrity as an object that can be broken. This type of metaphor, "being broken emotionally" is an image known and extended in both languages ("estar roto" in Spanish). However, in the translation "No te encuentras solo, ábrete a sentir", this image is

completely omitted, changing it to a more direct empathic message. It is metaphor converted into sense (Newmark, 1988) and translated through modulation (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995), showing once again a choice of emotional content over figurative style.

From the film *Wish*, three metaphors were found in the song *The Wish*. In the first one, [10c], the abstract concept of the mind is presented as a physical entity that can be expanded, occupying space. The translation fully respects the figurative image of the original, applying the same metaphor reproduced in the TL (Newmark, 1988), combined with a literal translation (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995), since both the structure and the metaphorical content are preserved in the target language.

The other two metaphors from that same song, [11c] and [12c], appear in two consecutive verses; in the first one, freedom is conceptualized as an internal substance physically held in the body, while in the second one, self-control is presented as a closed vessel containing emotions.

The translation “Hoy libero tanto espacio en mi interior, mas cubro y guardo al corazón lo pongo en contención” maintains both figurative images, adapting them to Spanish. It is translated using the same metaphor reproduced in the TL and literal translation procedures with lexical modulation to achieve naturalness.

From the second song of the film, *Knowing what I Know Now*, metaphor [13c] is an ontological metaphor where an abstract concept such as “rules” is presented as a physical object that can be broken. In the translation, “rules” is replaced by “role”, a change that implies a relevant conceptual shift: it no longer refers to an external norm, but rather to the social or personal role expected of the character. This shift reflects a metaphorical adaptation according to Newmark (1988) and modulation according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), since the perspective of the message is changed while maintaining its sense of rebellion.

From the film *Moana 2*, two ontological metaphors were found in the song *Beyond*. In the first one, [14d], the sky is presented as an entity with agency, capable of calling the character’s name. The second one, [15d], projects an image of destiny as a body or mechanism that is set in motion. The translation “Desconozco esta señal” eliminates the metaphor entirely, reducing the verse to a neutral observation. Therefore, according to Newmark’s (1988) method, the metaphor is deleted, and according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) it is translated through modulation of the content, prioritizing clarity over figurative style. In the second translation, [15d] “El destino ya está en marcha”, the metaphor is preserved entirely. This is done using

the metaphor reproduced in the TL (Newmark, 1988) and via a literal translation (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995), without any significative alteration in either the form or expressive weight.

To conclude this section, the table bellow presents the numerical data corresponding to the ontological metaphors discussed in this section.

Newmark	Total number (%)	Vinay & Darbelnet	Total number (%)
Same image	7 (46.6 %)	Literal	7 (46.6 %)
Replaced	0 (0 %)	Borrowing	0 (0%)
Converted into sense	7 (46.6 %)	Transposition	0 (0%)
Deleted	1 (6.7%)	Modulation	8 (53,3%)
		Calque	0 (0%)
		Equivalence	0 (0%)
		Adaptation	0 (0%)
Total	15 (100%)	Total	15 (100%)

Table 7: Ontological metaphors: quantitative data

5.4 Comparative Analysis

The following section presents a comparative analysis of the metaphor translation strategies applied in our data set, based on the theoretical frameworks of Newmark (1988) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). Two quantitative tables were created showing the distribution of techniques according to the three types of metaphors defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980): structural, orientational and ontological. This comparative view allows us to observe which procedures are more frequent and how each type of metaphor tends to be translated from English into Spanish.

Newmark	Structural metaphors	Orientalational metaphors	Ontological metaphors	Total (%)
Same image	6 (37.5%)	4 (10.3%)	7 (46.6 %)	17 (43.6%)
Replaced	2 (5.2%)	2 (5.2%)	0 (0 %)	4 (10.3%)
Converted into sense	8 (20.5%)	2 (5.2%)	7 (17.9 %)	17 (43.6%)
Deleted	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)
Total (%)	16 (41%)	8 (20.5%)	15 (100%)	39 (100%)

Table 8: Newmark´s (1988) translation procedures

Vinay & Darbelnet	Structural metaphors	Orientational metaphors	Ontological metaphors	Total (%)
Literal	4 (10.3%)	3 (7.7%)	7 (17.9 %)	14 (35.9%)
Borrowing	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Transposition	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Modulation	11 (28.2%)	5 (12.8%)	8 (20.5%)	24 (61.5%)
Calque	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Equivalence	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Adaptation	1 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.6%)
Total (%)	16 (41%)	8 (20.5%)	15 (38.5%)	39 (100%)

Table 9: Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation techniques

As shown in the first table, based on Newmark's typology, the most frequent procedures are the reproduction of the same metaphorical image in the target language (43.6%), and the conversion of the metaphor into meaning (also 43.6%). This balance suggests a double tendency. On the one hand, many metaphors are retained for their clarity or universality; on the other hand, a significant number are paraphrased to facilitate understanding or adapt to the cultural context. Substitution by other metaphors and omission are rare (10.3% and 2.6%, respectively), indicating that total elimination of the figurative content is almost always avoided.

It is noticeable how ontological metaphors are the most frequently retained (46.6%), probably due to their specificity and facility of transfer. On the other hand, structural metaphors are paraphrased more often (8 out of 16 cases), which could be due to the fact that their structure requires more adjustments in the TT. Orientational metaphors are the least frequent and tend to be retained or paraphrased in similar proportions.

In the second table, which shows Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) model, the most common technique is modulation (61.5%), reflecting the need to change focus or expression while maintaining the conceptual essence of the metaphor. Literal translation appears in 35.9% of the cases, especially in ontological metaphors, reinforcing the previous idea that these images are usually easily transferable between the two languages. Other techniques such as adaptation, borrowing or tracing are practically nonexistent, probably because the genre and register of the source text (children's songs) require clarity and accessibility.

In summary, it suggests that the treatment of metaphors in Disney songs goes for strategies which preserve or adapt the figurative content, here metaphors, rather than remove it. Both Newmark's and Vinay and Darbelnet's frameworks bring out modulation as well as semantic faithfulness as key to maintain the poem and the original text's emotional tone. It reflects how

much the translator tries to balance between being creative and clear so that metaphors can be understood by and striking to Spanish-speaking audiences.

6. CONCLUSION

The analysis has shown the utility and applicability of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) classification into three types of conceptual metaphors: structural, orientational and ontological. This categorization has allowed us to organize the data set in a coherent way and to reflect the different ways in which abstract ideas are conceptualized in the songs. Structural and ontological metaphors have proven to be more prevalent than orientational ones. This distribution indicates that the song lyrics analyzed tend to conceptualize abstract emotions and experiences through tangible objects, entities, and structured images. Such a tendency likely reflects an intention to facilitate emotional expression in a format that remains accessible, relatable, and engaging for a broad audience within the musical and audiovisual context.

Based on the simplified classification of Newmark's (1988) strategies of translating metaphor, it becomes clear that the two most commonly applied strategies were keeping the same metaphor in the target language and expressing it with a clearer or more direct expression. This indicates that translators often seek a balance between preserving the metaphorical image and ensuring that its meaning is easily understood by the target audience. Less frequent strategies included replacing the metaphor with another one and, or omitting it altogether, which reinforces the tendency to maintain metaphorical content rather than discard it.

From the perspective of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), modulation was the most used procedure. This suggests that translators often chose to reshape the metaphor or shift the point of view, likely to adapt it more naturally to Spanish. Literal translation also appeared frequently, especially in cases where the metaphor could be transferred directly because it made sense culturally and linguistically. The fact that both procedures were used so often shows that translators didn't rely on a single fixed strategy. Instead, they seemed to make decisions based on the specific needs of each case, sometimes preserving the original image, and other times reformulating it to maintain clarity or emotional impact.

When comparing the types of metaphor with the techniques used, it can be seen that structural metaphors are more often reworded or transformed, likely because of their complexity and the dynamic imagery they tend to involve. On the other hand, orientational and ontological metaphors do not appear to have regular patterns regarding the strategies applied. It may suggest that translators could depend more on specific contexts and musical restrictions in each case rather than the category of metaphor itself, as mentioned above.

The comparative analysis of metaphorical translation strategies (section 5.4) reveals a clear preference for retaining figurative content whenever possible. According to both Newmark's (1988) and Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) frameworks, most metaphors in the Disney songs were either translated literally or through modulation, rather than replaced or removed. This result points to the central role of metaphor in expressing emotion and poetic meaning in songs, and underlines the translator's task of balancing fidelity to the original with the need for clarity and naturalness in the target language. Overall, the data confirm that the translation of metaphors in audiovisual and musical contexts requires not only linguistic transfer, but it demands creativity, flexibility, and a strong awareness of both cultural and stylistic factors.

Nevertheless, this work has certain limitations. The data set is not very extent, and it is focused on a specific set of recent Disney films, which restricts the representativeness of the results. Moreover, being a case study, the conclusions should not be extrapolated to other different contexts. Regarding the work done, it should be recalled that the identification and classification of the metaphors have been done manually, which implies an unavoidable subjective component. Likewise, the analysis is based on the version dubbed into peninsular Spanish, without considering possible variations in other linguistic or regional versions.

Based on these limitations, future lines of research can be explored. It could be interesting to expand the corpus with songs from other films, productions companies, or even other genres to see if the observed patterns are maintained. A diachronic study on the evolution of the translations of metaphors in songs could be carried out to reflect the developments, trends and progress. Another possible direction could be the potential role of digital tools in automating the detection and analysis of metaphors. Finally, comparative studies between different variants of Spanish or between subtitled and dubbed translations could offer a broader perspective on the techniques applied in multilingual contexts.

7. REFERENCES

- Aiko, J. (2021). *Lead the Way* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Jhene-aiko-lead-the-way-lyrics>
- Bear, E., & Barlow, A. (2024). *Beyond* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Aulii-cravalho-beyond-lyrics>
- Bear, E., & Barlow, A. (2024). *Get Lost* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Awhimai-fraser-get-lost-lyrics>
- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings*. Longman.
- Bhatia, V. K. (2004). *Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view*. Continuum.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2004). *Critical metaphor analysis*. In *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis* (pp. 243-253). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Chaume, F. (2012). *Audiovisual translation: Dubbing*. Routledge.
- Delabastita, D. (2012). Literary translation. In *Handbook of Translation Studies*. Volume 2 (pp. 69-78). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Disney Spain. (2024). *Al final* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Maria-parrado-al-final-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. *En lo profundo* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Sugey-torres-en-lo-profundo-peso-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. (2023). *Esa es la verdad* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Ambar-garces-lorena-gomez-and-wish-elenco-esa-es-la-verdad-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. (2021). *Hasta vencer* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Danna-paola-hasta-vencer-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. (2023). *Mi deseo* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Ambar-garces-mi-deseo-lyrics>

- Disney Spain. (2021). *No se habla de Bruno* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Carolina-gaitan-mauro-castillo-daniela-sierra-juanse-diez-isabel-garces-and-olga-lucia-vives-no-se-habla-de-bruno-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. (2024). *Piérdete* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Diana-roig-pierdete-lyrics>
- Disney Spain. (2021). *Solo tú* [Spanish version lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Olga-lucia-vives-yaneth-waldman-juanpis-gonzalez-daniela-sierra-maluma-and-elenco-de-encanto-solo-tu-lyrics>
- Franzon, J. (2008). *The translation of song*. In J. Díaz-Cintas (Ed.), *New trends in audiovisual translation* (pp. 109–121). Multilingual Matters.
- Gorlée, D. L. (2005). *Song and significance: Virtues and vices of vocal translation*. Brill.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). The metaphorical structure of the human conceptual system. *Cognitive Science*, 4(2), 195–208. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0364-0213\(80\)80017-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0364-0213(80)80017-6)
- Low, P. (2008). Singable translations of songs. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, 16(1–2), 1–20.
- Low, P. (2005). *Translating songs: Lyrics and texts*. Peter Lang.
- Michaels, J., & Rice, B. (2023). *This Wish* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Ariana-debose-this-wish-lyrics>
- Michaels, J., & Rice, B. (2023). *Knowing What I Know Now* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Ariana-debose-angelique-cabral-and-wish-cast-knowing-what-i-know-now-lyrics>
- Miranda, L. M. (2021). *All of You* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Stephanie-beatriz-olga-merediz-john-leguizamo-adassa-maluma-and-encanto-cast-all-of-you-lyrics>
- Miranda, L. M. (2021). *Surface Pressure* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Jessica-darrow-surface-pressure-lyrics>
- Miranda, L. M. (2021). *We Don't Talk About Bruno* [Lyrics]. In *Genius*. <https://genius.com/Carolina-gaitan-mauro-castillo-adassa-rhenzy-feliz-diane-guerrero-and-stephanie-beatriz-we-dont-talk-about-bruno-lyrics>

- Newmark, P. (1988). The Translation of Metaphors. In *A textbook of translation* (pp. 104–113). essay, Prentice Hall.
- Susam-Sarajeva, Ş. (2008). Translation and music: Changing perspectives, frameworks and significance. *The Translator*, 14(2), 187–200.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Vinay, J.-P., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). *Comparative stylistics of French and English: A methodology for translation* (J. C. Sager & M.-J. Hamel, Trans.). John Benjamins.