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Audiovisual Translation: Translating Song Lyrics from English to Spanish.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	5
1. An Introduction to Translation	5
2. The Process of Translation	6
2.1. Translation: A Multidisciplinary Field	8
2.2. Equivalence effect.....	8
2.3. Translation Methods, Translation Strategies and Translation Techniques	9
3. Audiovisual Translation	12
4. Translating Music	15
4.1. Opera and Translation.....	15
4.2. Singable Translations.....	16
4.3. The Pentathlon Approach	19
ANALYSIS	21
5. Materials	21
6. Analysis	22
CONCLUSIONS	40
REFERENCES	44

Abstract

In our globalised society audiovisual culture is gaining more and more importance. Nowadays, many studies carry out research on the translations of TV series, films, documentaries and all kind of digital content. However, it seems that in some countries artists no longer translate their songs into other languages as they did in previous decades. For instance, some decades ago it was quite common to find Spanish versions of originally English language songs which were made by the artists themselves, but now we only have amateur translators who write the literal translations of the songs on the Internet.

The aim of this research paper is to examine the difficulties involved in producing a singable translation in comparison with elaborating a literal translation that it is only meant to be read. Factors involved in achieving a successful singable version will be discussed, using a selected corpus of songs in their original and translated versions.

Introduction

The aim of this study is to examine the task of audiovisual translation as well as to explain, in particular, the complex process of translating lyrics from English to Spanish.

The study will explain the differences between the translation methods, offering an analysis of those techniques most used in the songs selected for this dissertation. Thus, the study will result in an overview of the solutions the translators find to overcome the linguistic difficulties during the process of translation.

This work will also examine certain added difficulties for the translation of lyrics, in terms of issues which are not directly related to linguistics, but which determine the choices made by the translator, such as meter and metric, rhythm and rhyme.

We can establish the following items as the research questions on which this study is based:

- Which are the most used translation techniques?
- How do musical factors affect the translation?

- Is there gain and/or loss in the translations?

The reason for the choice of this topic is our interest both in music and in translation. Although it is not as usual today as in the past, there are still artists who do translate their songs into Spanish. The aim of this research is to analyse the resulting versions of these translations; to ascertain how far they can be considered equivalent (semantically), and to note any cultural changes causing semantic choices on the part of the translator

Previous Research

Some scholars had studied this topic of translating songs. It can be said that Peter Low is the one who devoted more time to the topic of lyrics translation. He published *Translating Song: Lyrics and Texts*, where he examines the difficulties that may appear, the complicated process of translating according to a rhythm and a rhyme or the freedom enjoyed by the translator. In addition, he wrote several articles such as “Singable Translations of Songs” (2010) or “The Pentathlon Approach to Translating Songs” (2005).

There appears to be little research carried out today regarding contemporary songs, and in particular the translation of lyrics from English to Spanish. In fact, we have only found some dissertations working on song translations but mainly from English to Indonesian. A reason for this may be the very few translations that are being made within this globalized culture in which English appears to dominate the market.

Instead, a recent line of research has focused on subtitles of films and TV series and dubbing with the rise of digital platforms offering audiovisual contents in TV series, films and documentaries, such as Netflix, HBO or Amazon Prime Video.

This study is divided into three broad parts: the theoretical framework, the analysis and the conclusions. Part 1, the theoretical part is subdivided into four sections. The first section is a general introduction to translation; the second section deals with the process of translation;

section number three addresses the issue of audiovisual translation nowadays; and finally, the fourth section is dedicated to music and translation throughout history.

Part 2, the analysis, is organised in two sections. In the first section, Materials, the songs selected for this study are presented. In section 2 we provide explanations about how the analysis was carried out methodologically, and arguments are presented along with examples from the selected materials.

The last part shows the conclusions that were taken from the analysis and considering the theoretical framework used for this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. An Introduction to Translation

To the non-linguist, translation ought to be easy, provided we have a dictionary. However, nothing could be further than the truth. Translation is not only changing texts from one language to another, in fact it is not necessarily “from one language to another”. Roman Jakobson in his “On linguistic aspects of translation” (1959/2000) distinguishes three types or categories of translation: intralingual translation (rephrasing or clarifying), interlingual (from one language to another) and intersemiotic (from linguistic signs to non-verbal signs) (cited in Munday, 2001: 36). In this dissertation we will focus only on interlingual translation as we will be dealing with translations from English to Spanish.

Interlingual translation is actually more complex than just changing words from one language to another; in fact, it can be defined as “the communication of meaning from one language (the source) to another language (the target)” (“What is translation?”, n.d.). That is to say, translation is transforming a text into another language but with the complication of maintaining the original sense, tone, purpose of the text (“What is translation?”, n.d.). In other

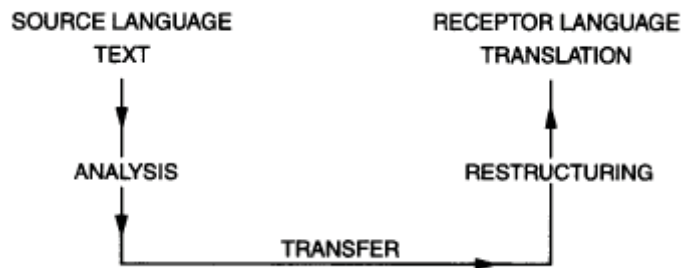
words, and as Peter Newmark (1995) explained, we have to maintain the effect that the source text provokes in the original readers, in the target text:

The principle is variously referred to as the principle of similar or equivalent response or effect, or of functional or dynamic (Nida) equivalence. It bypasses or supersedes the nineteenth-century controversy about whether a translation should incline towards the source or the target language, and the consequent faithful versus beautiful, literal versus free, form versus content disputes. The principle demands a considerable imaginative or intuitive effect from the translator, since he must not identify himself with the reader of the original, but must empathize with him, recognizing that he may have reactions and sympathies alien to his own (Newmark, 1995: 10).

2. The Process of Translation

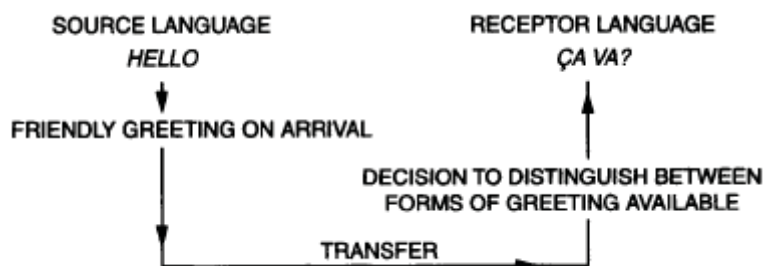
Translation Studies as a discipline appeared around the 1950's and 1960's, as it was regarded as a methodology for other areas (language teaching, contrastive linguistics, etc.) instead of a discipline itself before these decades. Regarding this, Eugene Nida had an important role since he improved the development of translation studies with his "scientific" approach, which was "materialised" with the publication of *Toward a Science of Translating* and *The Theory and Practice of Translation* in the 1960's. As Munday explains, "Nida's more systematic approach borrows theoretical concepts and terminology from Noam Chomsky's work on syntactic structure which formed the theory of generative-transformational grammar" (Munday, 2001: 38). In translation, meaning is crucial so Nida studied it and distinguished three types of meaning—linguistic meaning, referential (denotative) meaning and connotative meaning—, he created techniques to identify each of them and thus, he helped the translator during the process of translation (with ambiguities, cultural items...) without forgetting the importance of the context in order to understand meaning, above all, "when dealing with metaphorical meaning"

(Munday, 2001: 39). Thus, the process of translation by Nida would be represented as in the following diagram:



(Bassnett, 2002: 25)

Following the diagram, the process would consist firstly of an analysis of the source text, then we would study how to transfer the information from the ST (source text) to restructure it into the target language. To illustrate this, Susan Bassnett (2002) uses an example of translating to French, German and Italian the friendly greeting *hello* (taking into account that “Whilst English does not distinguish between the word used when greeting someone face to face and that one used when answering the telephone, French, German and Italian all do make that distinction” (Bassnett,2002 : 26). So, taking this into account, Bassnet gives the following diagram and explanation to make the process more understandable:



“What has happened during the translation process is that the notion of greeting has been isolated, and the word *hello* has been replaced by a phrase carrying the same notion” (Bassnett, 2002: 26). So, here, following Nida’s theory, what Bassnett did is to adapt the meaning, or if

we prefer, intention, from one language to another taking into account cultural conventions: *ça va?* is the friendly form used as a greeting in French, as saying just *bonjour* would be less friendly than English *hello*.

2.1. Translation: A Multidisciplinary Field

Knowing the complexity of translation, it is understandable that different perspectives are needed to achieve the final goal. Information from other areas is necessary to reach the object of what translation implies. Douglas H. Robinson (2003) in *Becoming a Translator*, explains, thus, that translation is a discipline that implies many different theoretical perspectives. Translation can be approached through psychological theories, terminological theories, linguistic theories, social theories or cultural theories, for instance (Robinson, 2003: 3). Nida also points out this interdisciplinary relation when talking about translation saying that it is “dependent upon a number of disciplines: linguistics, cultural anthropology, psychology, communication theory, and neurophysiology” (Nida, 1991: 21).

Nida (1991) himself proposes four different perspectives- philological perspective (dealing with faithfulness when translating), linguistic perspective (dealing with linguistic structures in different languages), communicative perspective (dealing with the function of language in different social communicative situations) and socio-semiotic perspective (dealing with paralinguistic and extralinguistic features as visual and auditory features in audiovisual translations for instance) - all of them seen “as complementary and supplementary” (Nida, 1991: 21) to the process of translation.

2.2. Equivalence effect

There is a key concept in interlingual translation which both Jakobson and Nida, among other scholars, have mentioned and this is equivalence.

This notion of equivalence was established against the traditional literal translation and the idea was to find equivalents between two different languages. Jakobson explains that the equivalence in meaning is a problem as “there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units” (Jakobson, 1959/2000: 114 cited in Munday, 2001: 36). This is related to the differences both in language, culture and time although Jakobson puts more focus on the linguistic differences between two different languages. Nida, on the other hand, proposes two types of equivalence: formal equivalence, oriented towards the source text (ST) and dynamic equivalence, oriented towards the target text (TT). Formal equivalence focuses on imitating the ST as Nida explains: “Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content ... One is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language” (Nida 1964a: 159 cited in Munday, 2001: 41). In contrast, dynamic equivalence is focused on the target reader and the effect that the text provokes in the receptor. This is the “principle of equivalent effect” by which, as Nida explains, “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message” (Nida 1964:159 cited in Munday, 2001: 41). Thus, in this dynamic equivalence the importance lies in keeping the meaning and effect of the original in the TT one rather than the structure or style.

2.3. Translation Methods, Translation Strategies and Translation Techniques

In the field of translation there is a great confusion regarding these concepts, not only because of the meaning they have, but also because depending on the authors we will find different names for the same concepts (methods, strategies, techniques, procedures, processes, etc.). In this work, we will use the terms methods, strategies and techniques.

To approach the process of translation we must be aware of the differences between these three elements. First of all, it is important to distinguish between translation methods and translation

techniques, which usually are confused and understood as synonyms when they are not. As Molina and Hurtado (2002) explain, translation methods affect the whole text while translation techniques affect the micro-units of the text. Thus, the translation methods determine the translation techniques and they “should function harmoniously” (Molina and Hurtado, 2002: 508).

With regards to translation strategies, this concept seems a little more abstract. This refers to how the translator decides to act when he or she encounters some difficulties during the process of translation. In other words, Molina and Hurtado (2002) define translation strategies as procedures used to solve problems whose solutions “will be materialized by using a particular technique” (2002: 508).

2.3.1 Translation Methods

Peter Newmark in his *A Textbook of Translation* (1998) discusses the main problem of translation: how to do it, i.e. “whether to translate literally or freely” (Newmark, 1998: 45).

Therefore, he establishes the following methods:

- Word-for-word translation. This method is to translate the words without taking into account the context. The word order is also preserved.
- Literal translation. Here words are translated, again out of context but the structures are adapted to the target language ones.
- Faithful translation. The objective here is to transmit the contextual meaning of the source text without paying much attention to the form.
- Semantic translation. Once more the attention is on the meaning but here the translator also cares about the aesthetics of the target text.
- Adaptation. Adaptation supposes the rewriting of the source text, adapting the context and culture of the source language to the context and the culture of the target language. This is frequently used in translating plays.

- Free translation. Here we transmit the context but differently from the ST. It is a kind of paraphrasing; we change the form.
- Idiomatic translation. With this method the translator transmits the message by using “colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original” (Newmark, 1998: 41).
- Communicative translation. The objective is to reproduce “the exact contextual meaning” making both content and language accessible to the reader.

About these methods Newmark (1998) points out that Communicative and Semantic methods are the ones which achieve the principles of accuracy and economy and explains that:

Semantic translation is personal and individual, follows the thought processes of the author, tends to over-translate, pursues nuances of meaning, yet aims at concision in order to reproduce pragmatic impact. Communicative translation is social, concentrates on the message and the main force of the text, tends to under-translate, to be simple, clear and brief, and is always written in a natural and resourceful style (Newmark, 1998: 47-48).

2.3.2. Translation Techniques & Translation Strategies

Translation Techniques and Translation Strategies may be confused but the key difference is that, as Molina and Hurtado (2002) point out, strategies are part of the process while the techniques refer to the result.

In this dissertation, as already stated, we are going to study which are the most used translation techniques. These may have some differences depending on the scholars, but we will take the list proposed by Molina and Hurtado (2002):

- adaptation
- amplification
- borrowing

- calque
- compensation
- description
- discursive creation
- established equivalent
- generalization
- linguistic amplification
- linguistic comprehension
- literal translation
- modulation
- particularization
- reduction
- substitution
- transposition
- variation

3. Audiovisual Translation

With the arrival and development of new technologies, translation studies suffered changes.

The first contributions to audiovisual translation date from 1957, when Simon Laks studied the subtitling in films. Later, audiovisual translation would become a separate field due to the differences with traditional translation studies. Additionally, this new field found that traditional translation studies do not cover all the areas and needs of audiovisual translation.

In fact, with the new research on audiovisual translation the concept of equivalence, explained above, was argued and, somehow, improved. As Chaume (2018) explains,

equivalence is no longer either formal correspondence to the source text (“formal equivalence”), or “dynamic equivalence” of effect [...] (Nida and Taber 1974), but equivalence to target culture norms, whether they are norms leading to formal equivalence, norms leading to dynamic equivalence or norms leading to the shaping of a new domestic product that is more or less far removed from its original counterpart [...] (Chaume, 2018: 85).

That is to say that equivalence in audiovisual translation is not so focused on the source text (in case of formal equivalence) or in the source effect (in case of dynamic equivalence) but on the target culture: now the translation is carried out taking into account the target audience, not looking to imitate the source but trying to convey the target norms.

As mentioned before, equivalence is improved as “the relation between source and target texts is not always one of formal or dynamic correspondence (equivalence of form and equivalence of effect) (Chaume, 2018: 86) and “equivalence can take now a third meaning, i.e. the creation of a new target product that is in some way related to the original but not necessarily in terms of formal equivalence or dynamic equivalence” (Chaume, 2018: 86). This is what is called transcreation, one of the several new techniques that appeared in audiovisual translation.

Another technique is transadaptation, proposed by Neves (2005) to include all the areas of audiovisual translation, because it is not only about dubbing and subtitling. Here extra-linguistic issues should be taken into account with the same importance as the linguistic ones. An example would be for hearing-impaired spectators; they need special audiovisual translations in a film, for example, because translating the dialogues (via sign language or with subtitles) may be not enough to transmit everything (music, tone of voice, etc). Then, this new term, as Chaume explains, “is a blend word, transadaptation, thus highlighting its potential to encompass all types of translation as well as adaptation, thus allowing translation theory to go

beyond the usual translation dichotomies such as literal versus free translation, translation versus adaptation, etc.” (Chaume, 2018: 93).

Apart from the newness of this research field and the differences that arose with traditional translation studies, it is interesting to see in which areas it works. Mainly when studying audiovisual translation, the focus is on cinema, films, etc. and the dubbing or subtitling. There are many previous pieces of research on these two specialities (dubbing and subtitling) as for example *Audiovisual Translation: Language Transfer on Screen* (2008) by Jorge Díaz Cintas and Gunilla Anderman, *Audiovisual Translation, Subtitling* (2014) by Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Aline Remael, “Audiovisual translation: Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing” (2005) by Josélia Neves, and even the first studies by Simon Lask (1957) were about subtitles in films. In papers dealing with audiovisual translation in general, at some point the focus turns into dubbing and subtitling as in “Is audiovisual translation putting the concept of translation up against the ropes?” (2018) by Frederic Chaume, for instance.

Nowadays new devices in audiovisual translation, such as voice assistance, are very productive or the online translators that also give you the pronunciation of the translated text you looked for. However, there is a field where little research has been carried out and this is the translation of song lyrics. In fact, there are several artists who made a new version, for instance in Spanish, of their songs, which were originally written in English. It may seem that as there is little research, the translation of lyrics is not important or has no difficulties. However, it can have cultural consequences and also, it is not an easy process as the translator has to deal with a pre-existing melody, a meaning, a rhythm, rhyme, etc.

4. Translating Music

As some authors had pointed out before, translation needs to take information from other fields and disciplines, and when translating music, the translator has to take into account all these disciplines with the limits of corresponding to the original version of the song.

What can be the reason to translate the lyrics of a particular song? As Minors explains, “many of the texts are densely poetic and many contain rare or archaic words” (Minors, 2013: 72) which can be difficult to understand for a non-native speaker so artists and groups decided to translate their songs from English to Spanish, for this reason. A non-English-speaking audience “may enjoy the musical component but can have little sense of the semantic content or the subtleties of the word-music combination” (Minors, 2013: 72) if they have no idea of the original language of the song.

4.1. Opera and Translation

Research into translating songs is not very common nor popular, as we have already said, but these kinds of translations have a long history. In fact, it is believed that the first singable translation appears in the 17th century with “the anonymous English translation of the Italian libretto by Aurelio Aureli (1652-1708) for the 1655 opera *Erismena* by composer Francesco Cavalli (1602-76)” (Clinkscale, 1992: II: 64, cited in Apter and Herman, 2016: 4).

In this kind of translation, operas have an important role as they were traditionally translated and it was “an opera’s infallible mark of international success” (Jacobs, 1992: 787). In fact, as Philip Gossett explains, “The idea that operas, for aesthetic reasons, should be sung in the languages in which they were originally written is relatively modern (. . .)” (Gosset, 2006: 380) but if they are translated, they will reach a larger audience.

4.2. Singable Translations

With the task of translating song lyrics, we cannot talk about literal translation because, normally, these translations must fit the original melody so the translation cannot be perfect, that is to say, it cannot be totally the same as the original. One of the reasons, apart from the already established musical limits, as Jakobson said, is that there is no full equivalence between different languages and therefore, the translation will be, inevitably, slightly different.

Again, the act of translating may seem easy in this field of song lyrics, but we have to take into account that it is as difficult as composing it. We have to be aware that when composing a song, usually the normal process is to adapt the melody to the already written lyrics, but when translating it we have to adapt the lyrics to the melody (which cannot be changed, at least not normally) at the same time that we have to maintain the effect that the song provokes in the original version while keeping or creating a rhyme and a rhythm.

Cited in *Translating for Singing: The Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics* are the following reasons why a translation of lyrics cannot be perfect, as proposed by Burton Raffel (1928):

- 1 No two languages having the same phonology, it is impossible to re-create the sounds of a work composed in one language in another language.
- 2 No two languages having the same syntactic structures, it is impossible to re-create the syntax of a work composed in one language in another language.
- 3 No two languages having the same vocabulary, it is impossible to re-create the vocabulary of a work composed in one language in another language.
- 4 No two languages having the same literary history, it is impossible to

re-create the literary forms of one culture in the language and literary culture of another.

5 No two languages having the same prosody, it is impossible to re-create the prosody of a literary work composed in one language in another language (Raffel, 1988: 12 cited in Apter and Herman, 2016: 2).

As Peter Low explains, translating songs differs greatly from other types of translation because in singable translations “the TT - the verbal message in the new code - is intended specifically to be transmitted simultaneously with the very same non-verbal code that accompanied the ST” (Gorlée, 2005: 187).

Taking into account the previous points, the translator must create a new good singable version in the target language that “must work on stage, and it must still be closely enough related to the source so that it is not an entirely new piece” (Apter and Herman, 2016: 4).

Going back to Jakobson and his three types of translation (intralingual, interlingual and semiotic), Apter and Herman explain that these are not enough to study the translation of songs because of the elements that we have to take into account when producing a singable translation:

A singable translation requires a type of translation beyond the three proposed by Jakobson, because the task is to transfer one set of signs, the verbal, from an interacting pair of two sets of signs, the musical and the verbal, into another set of verbal signs which, in conjunction with the music, will create an interaction either equivalent to the original interaction or, if different, still somehow related and desirable (Apter and Herman, 2016: 5).

Apart from the musical and verbal elements, a translator working with a singable translation probably would have to take into account a third element: the visual one. This has to do with

live performances and the musical video clips of songs; “on occasion, translators have to modify a translation to accommodate visual elements, especially when dubbing a movie or television show for which no visual element can be changed” (Apter and Herman, 2016: 5). However, it is true that this may be not so important for songs, as normally, when releasing a version in a different language, artists may publish another video (although similar to the original) but singing in the new language as it would be stylistically odd if the lips did not coincide with the sound, or they can leave the new version without a video clip. Nevertheless, although it may not be something of great importance for the translation of lyrics, it is true that the performance contributes (or not) to a good singable translation: “those performers who honour the words as well as the music - and their visual communication with face and hands can be seen as a third code, ideally serving the auditory codes of language and music” (Peter Low in Gorlée, 2005 : 188).

Apart from the constraints of music, rhythm and rhyme, there are other ones as important as those mentioned before: “the physical limitations of the vocal apparatus, the metrical rigors of a rigidly pre-set prosody, and the need to match verbal sense to musical color” (Apter, 1989:27 cited in Gorlée, 2005: 185). Therefore, obviously, the translator has to take into account the voice quality of the artist as the latter must be able to perform the song when creating the new version of the lyrics. The metrical system also has to be more or less maintained in order to coincide with the original one because of the tempo of the original melody, in the same way that the new lyrics must concord in meaning with the melody or music.

In order to translate a song there are different methods (also used in other types of translation) as the ones that Peter Low mentions (some of them used by translators of Brassens, a French singer and songwriter): paraphrase, transposition, modulation, replacement, metaphors, compensation in place, calque, omission, cultural adaptation, stylistic equivalence ... among others (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 189).

Related to this, Low mentions in his chapter “The Pentathlon Approach to Translating Songs” (2005) this list of rules proposed by the translator Andrew Kelly in order to achieve a good singable translation:

- (1) Respect the rhythms;
 - (2) Find and respect the meaning;
 - (3) Respect the style;
 - (4) Respect the rhymes;
 - (5) Respect the sound;
 - (6) Respect your choice of intended listeners; and
 - (7) Respect the original. (1992-1993: 92)
- (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 189)

But Kelly was not the only one who listed pieces of advice to achieve the desirable translation. Richard Dyer-Bennet, though more in relation with classical music, proposes these four guidelines:

- (1) The TT must be singable — otherwise any other virtues it has are meaningless;
- (2) The TT must sound as if the music had been fitted to it, even though it was actually composed to fit the source text;
- (3) The rhyme-scheme of the original poetry must be kept because it gives shape to the phrases;
- (4) Liberties must be taken with the original meaning when the first three requirements cannot otherwise be met. (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 190)

4.3. The Pentathlon Approach

Thus, in an attempt to create a technique to translate songs, Peter Low proposes the Pentathlon Principle. To explain this, Low compares a translator to an Olympic pentathlete as both have

to pass five different tests to achieve just one whole result. A translator must work on these five criteria: Singability, Sense, Naturalness, Rhythm and Rhyme. In relation to these, Low says that “broadly speaking, the first four of these criteria correspond to the translator’s duties — respectively — to the singer, to the author, to the audience, and to the composer. The fifth criterion (rhyme) is a special case” (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 192).

The criteria of singability, as we have said, is related to the singer; the final product, the translation, must be singable by the singer. This is because the translation has to be done regarding the abilities of the singer, taking into account his or her voice, pitch, etc. Here the translators have to work with the length of words, number of syllables and stressed or unstressed syllables.

The second criterion is sense which deals with the meaning of the song and is related to the original author. The translator must maintain the sense that the author gave to the original product, but this does not imply a literal translation. In fact, as Low says, “the Pentathlon Principle calls for flexibility” (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 194) in this area.

Naturalness relates to the language used in the translation. This criterion is related with the audience as they are the ones who will receive and judge the new product. As Low explains, “the criterion requiring a translator to use the TL in a reasonably natural way involves various considerations such as register and word-order” (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 195). This point of naturalness has to do with the fact (although debated) that a translation must be natural a translation should not be recognised as a translation because that would mean that it is not a good one.

Another criterion is rhythm, related to the composer. Here the translator has to create a new product that works with the pre-existing rhythm of the original song. To achieve this, the translator must also play with the number of syllables per line, and as Frits Noske says “musical prosody requires that the rhythm and number of syllables be identical with those of the original

lines” (1970: 30, cited in Low (Gorlée), 2005: 196). Regarding this, Low says that “according to the Pentathlon Principle, identical syllable-count is desirable; but in practice a translator who finds that an eight-syllable line is insolubly, unacceptably clumsy, may choose to add a syllable or subtract one” (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 197). However, Low also says that a translator has to be aware that the count-syllable (used in poetry for instance) is not exactly the same as the rhythm of a song where the length of the notes is also an important issue related to the rhythm. The last criterion is the rhyme which, for many translators, as Low says, consciously or unconsciously, has a great importance. However, “the Pentathlon Principle works particularly well in the question of rhyme, because it opposes rigidity of thinking. When rhyme is present in the ST, some translators simply do without it — and in cases where the rhyme can be lost without significant cost, they will be quite right” (Low in Gorlée, 2005: 198). With the Pentathlon Principle, the rhyme, as with sense, calls again for flexibility as maintaining a rigid rhyme would be incompatible with maintaining all the other four criteria. Low exemplifies this flexibility as follows:

For example, if the ST is a rhymed quatrain, I assume that the most important rhyme is the final one — but I might not care whether this line rhymes with line 1, 2, or 3. And I might not care whether the other two lines rhyme well, or at all. This is particularly true if the lines are short (if the ST rhymes after every 6 syllables rather than 10 or 12). It is a general rule that the tighter the rhyming, the more the rhyme will determine the whole line (2005: 198).

ANALYSIS

5. Materials

The aim is to study how the process of the translation of lyrics from English to Spanish is carried out. For this purpose, we will compare and study a series of songs (originally written

in English) and their versions in Spanish. The first aim is to observe which techniques the translators used and if some are more used than others.

The selected songs with their translations to be analysed are:

1. Beyoncé: If I were a boy - Si yo fuera un chico
2. Scorpions: Wind of Change - Vientos de cambio
3. Christina Aguilera: Genie in a bottle - Genio atrapado
4. Bon Jovi: This ain't a love song – Como yo nadie te ha amado

6. Analysis

The first aim of this paper was to elaborate a corpus of translated songs in which we could find the most used translating techniques. Nevertheless, it appeared to be a difficult task.

Firstly, it is not so simple to pick isolated words and study which techniques were used since, as several authors explain, when translating song lyrics, there will not be a one-to-one correspondence between words or syntactic constructions, for instance. Thus, instead of working with isolated words, we will analyse lines as units of meaning since there are many which are completely transformed or even eliminated, others that are adapted and others, translated literally.

Additionally, in order to achieve a singable translation, which would be the principle objective of these translations as several scholars have said, there are a series of rules that must be followed such as respecting the rhythms and the rhymes, or taking into account the voice and pitch of the singer. Thus, it can be difficult to find an exact word to translate each original word and maintain the meaning while taking into account these musical limitations.

Therefore, we decided to adapt the methodology used to this analysis. Instead of the elaboration of a corpus, we decided it would be more interesting to carry out a close reading, or a “deep” analysis of a limited number of songs, taking into account linguistic issues but without

forgetting the importance and influence of the musical and melodic limits. However, this does not mean the elimination of comments about translating techniques, as it is obvious that they are used, but from now on, the focus is not only on this specific point.

To understand that doing such a rigid analysis of the translation of the lyrics of a song would not be viable, we had to re-read the information we already had and to read how many other authors agreed on the characteristics of this kind of poetic translations.

Nikolay Gumilev (1919, cited in Beavitt, 2018) establishes nine formal elements necessary to achieve a singable translation, which are:

1. Number of lines
2. Meter and measure
3. Alternation of rhymes
4. Character of enjambment
5. Character of rhymes
6. Linguistic register
7. Metaphor type
8. Special devices
9. Transitions of tones

According to these elements, we will observe the number of lines, meter and measure and the rhyme scheme, which appear to be key elements in the previously commented Pentathlon Approach too. Therefore, observing that several authors consider these factors to be important in the translation of lyrics, we also chose to focus on them.

We will therefore study and compare both original and translated lyrics of the four songs mentioned above. First, we will study the formal factors, i.e. number of lines, number of syllables and rhyme patterns. An important point here is the nomenclature used.. In poetry we analyse lines and stanzas, but when we are working with song lyrics we talk about verses, pre-

chorus, chorus, post-chorus and bridges. However, there may be songs that only contain some of these, and others that will have all of them. Apart from this, a song will always have verses and chorus. The difference between these two, as von Appen and Frei-Hauenschild (2015) explain, is that the chorus “is repeated largely without change in harmony, melody, or lyrics” while the several verses that we can find “remain more or less identical with respect to harmony and melody but are differentiated by the lyrics” (3). The pre-chorus and bridge are related for some authors. Von Appen and Frei-Hauenschild mention that for some, bridge and pre-chorus are the same (“a transitional part between the verse and the chorus” (4)), while others understand the bridge as a “discrete section within a verse/chorus form that introduces new material which provides a point of contrast within the final third of the song.” (4). A remarkable point about these two ideas of the bridge is that the first one is repeated before the chorus while the second one appears just once over the last part of the song.

Once finished After the formal analysis, we will reflect on meaning, observing if the general meaning was kept, and comparing lines thus trying to establish a list of the most used translation techniques. However, we will not point every line here, but we will comment on how many translation techniques there may be in a song, showing some of the examples and curious cases.

Beyoncé – If I Were a Boy

The first song is “If I Were a Boy” by the American singer Beyoncé, which was released in 2008 in the United States. The title of the Spanish version is “Si Yo Fuera un Chico” and it was released in the same year.

Formal Analysis

To begin with, both the original and the translation maintain the same number of lines to keep the structure. In addition, we observe that the number of syllables is almost maintained too.

Most lines share the same number of syllables though in some cases there is a difference of one or two.

Regarding the rhyme scheme, we have found that these lyrics do not have a normal rhyme. Robin Frederick in her webpage explains that in this song we can find internal rhyme instead a traditional rhyme scheme, although “the second verse does have a rhyme scheme on the line endings (*phone / alone / go / home*) while preserving internal rhymes (*faithful / waiting*).” (2014). In the Spanish version we cannot observe a traditional rhyme either, but we can notice that the scheme of internal rhymes is kept, although not in the same places and words:

English	Spanish
If I were a boy	Si yo fuera un chico
Even just for a day	Sólo por una vez
I'd roll out of bed in the morning	Yo me vestiría como quiero
And throw on what I wanted then go	Con lo que vea primero y me voy
Drink beer with the guys	Saldría a buscar
And chase after girls	Chicas por montón
I'd kick it with who I wanted	Mis amigos que son leales
And I'd never get confronted for it	Siempre van a acompañarme hasta el fin
'Cause they'd stick up for me	Cada noche a vivir

Nevertheless, while listening to the sung versions, we can notice some sort of cohesion regarding the sounds and rhymes at the end of the lines and that is because we can observe slant rhymes. A half-rhyme or slant rhyme occurs “with words that have similar, but not identical sounds.” (“What Is Slant Rhyme? Understanding the Definitions of Slant Rhyme and Why Slant Rhymes Are Useful in Writing, With Examples”, 2019). Therefore, we can hear

how some words have similar sounds and seem to give phonetical structure to the lines, in both versions:

Boy / day / morning

Quiero / voy / montón

Go / guys / girls

Fin / vivir

In addition, if we compare both versions, listening and comparing the sound of each line, we can notice that somehow the same vowel sound is kept in the same lines, or at least a slant rhyme is kept between both versions:

If I were a boy – Si yo fuera un chico

Even just for a day – Sólo por una vez

Semantic analysis

Regarding the general meaning of the song, Beyoncé talks about how it would be to be a boy in relation with the treatment of women. During the song, she is building a hypothesis about how she would be in a relationship if she was a boy; she portrays the licenses that she would have as boy (*throw on what I wanted then go; drink beer with guys/ and chase after girls; I would turn off my phone/ tell everyone it's broken/ so they'd think that I was sleeping alone*).

However, the chorus depicts something very different as the Afro-American singer says how she would know how to treat a woman, being capable of hearing and understanding, showing sympathy. In addition, she talks about stereotypes regarding gender by portraying these male licenses, as they could do whatever they want in contrast with women. On the other hand, the bridge establishes a sort of division regarding the story of the song. This is the turning point where we understand that she is talking about a concrete man in a concrete relationship. The bridge is when, as the female member of the couple she tells the boy that they are finished and there is no possibility of being together again. The end of the song is the Chorus 2, and she says

that because of being a boy he cannot understand a girl and love her, because he is just a boy.

Therefore, we notice the other side of the coin if we compare chorus 1 and chorus 2.

In the Spanish version, the general meaning is kept to a certain degree, although some lines are “transformed”, surely because of the musical limits but maintaining the general sense. However, in verse 2 we find a considerable change in meaning. While in the English version she keeps mentioning which stereotypes she would be doing as a man, in the Spanish version we have a change in who is talking since it is the girl who is saying that she is not a boy and makes comparisons about boys and girls:

English	Spanish
If I were a boy	Si yo fuera un chico
I would turn off my phone	Pero ves no lo soy
Tell everyone it's broken	Los chicos son de molde
So they'd think that I was sleepin' alone	Y nosotras somos de corazón
I'd put myself first	Se piensan que son
And make the rules as I go	Los del sexo superior
'Cause I'd know that she'd be faithful	Pero cuando los queremos
Waitin' for me to come home	Los vence nuestra seducción
To come home	Seducción

However, there is not a great change in meaning: in both versions the artist depicts this image of the boy who does whatever he wants to do without nothing to worry about:

I'd put myself first / and make the rules as I go – Se piensan que son / los del sexo superior.

But on the other hand, while in the English version the boy (who is the one who is supposedly speaking) depicts this image of the fair and loyal girl who is at home waiting for her husband/couple, in Spanish the girl talks about the power of seduction women have over men.

Somehow the roles are exchanged, and this might be for melodic and musical issues, rather than due to cultural reasons, although this could be a debatable issue.

Apart from these differences in meaning, when analysing the lines regarding the translation techniques, we have found that the most common one is the discursive creation. This implies that the translated line has nothing to do with the original one although it contributes keeping the general meaning. These are some examples of discursive creation in “If I Were a Boy”:

When you lose the one you wanted / ‘Cause he’s taking you for granted

De perder a quien se quiere / Porque ignoras lo que tienes

I’d kick with who I wanted / And I’d never get confronted for it

Mis amigos que son leales / siempre van a acompañarme hasta el fin

We have several techniques whose occurrence is the same as is the case of linguistic amplification or linguistic compression for instance:

- Linguistic amplification. In this example we can observe how in Spanish this intensifier *mucho mejor* is added to the verb *comprender*:

*I think I could **understand** / How it feels to love a girl*

*Sé que podría saber / **Comprender mucho mejor***

- Linguistic compression. Here, the word just disappears in the Spanish version to keep a similar number of syllables in order to concord with the melody as the original line:

*But you’re **just** a boy / You don’t understand*

Pero eres ? un chico / Qué le vas a hacer

Reduction and transposition are other techniques that we could notice when analysing, as we can see in this example where the DO (to her) is eliminated and *hurts* changes from being a verb to a noun:

I'd listen to her / 'Cause I know how it hurts

Sabría escuchar ? / Pues conozco el dolor

As it could be supposed, literal translation is one of the less used, being used only once to translate the first line of the song, which is repeated at the beginning of the chorus:

If I were a boy

Si yo fuera un chico

In the following chart we can see the techniques used in this translation:

If I Were a Boy – Si Yo Fuera un Chico

Discursive creation	Amplification
Linguistic compression	Variation
Compensation	Literal translation
Reduction	Transposition
Linguistic amplification	

Scorpions – Wind of Change

The second song to be analysed is “Wind of Change” by Scorpions, a German group who released this song in 1990.

Formal analysis

Starting with a formal analysis, as we have seen with the previous song, the number of lines is maintained in both versions. The song has six lines in each verse and 4 in the choruses. Regarding the number of syllables, again, we have some slight differences in some lines (just a difference of one or two syllables).

Analysing the rhyme, again, it is complicated to establish a traditional rhyme scheme during the whole song, but we can find it in some verses such as one and three:

Verse 1	Verse 3
I follow the Moskva – a	Walking down the street – a
Down to Gorky Park – a	And distant memories – a
Listening to the wind of change – b	Are buried in the past forever -
An August summer night – c	I follow the Moskva – b
Soldiers passing by – c	And down to Gorky Park – b
Listening to the wind of change – b	Listening to the wind of change -

However, as we can see in verse 3 we have blank lines but it follows the structure of the rhyme in verse 1 scheme as the blank lines substitute the “b” lines.

Regarding the chorus, although we cannot establish an end rhyme, we face an internal slant rhyme in some points, something that seems to be common in songs:

*Take **me** to the **magic** of the **moment***

*On a **glory** night*

*Where the children of **tomorrow** **dream** away*

*In the **wind** of **change***

Therefore, as we can see, there is slant rhyme in some words as they sound similar, thus giving a sense of structure to the lyrics: ***me** / **magic**; **moment** / **glory** / **tomorrow**; **dream** / **wind**; **away** / **change**.*

On the other hand, in the Spanish version, although we can establish a rhyme scheme, it is slightly different from the original one. Actually, we can observe that verse 1 has a rhyme scheme which is aab - -b. But if we carefully observe the rhyme in the Spanish version, we can

notice that in each verse there are at least two lines that have a perfect rhyme or even the words are repeated as we can see in the following examples:

Se achica el mundo más

Quien iba a creer

*Que fuéramos tú y yo **hermanos***

El futuro ya se ve

Se puede hasta tocar

*Soplando con los vientos **nuevos***

Semantic analysis

Regarding the meaning of the song, it is said to be about the fall of the Berlin wall. However, according to an interview the group gave to the Rolling Stone Magazine, it was created before this historical episode, when they were about to give a concert in Russia (although the political situation had changed). The song is a whole metaphor of the liberty the people were achieving at the moment, talking about the act of *listening to the wind* (perhaps instead of gunshots and bombs), being *close like brothers*, the children dreaming away and obviously this *wind of change* referring to the new socio-political situation. In the Spanish version, the meaning is kept, maintaining the metaphors and it even seems like a literal translation overall. In fact, there are lines that are literally translated, and they work perfectly: *Take me to the magic of the moment – Llévame a la magia del momento*. Obviously, we have adaptations but in contrast with the previous song, the lines are not rewritten and instead each verse keeps the meaning just adapting words and expressions.

Thus, keeping a record of the translation techniques used, we found that discursive creation and literal translation are the most used ones:

- Discursive creation. We can see how the new lines in Spanish, although they seem to be equivalent, are different.

*Where the children of tomorrow dream away / **In the wind of change***

*Donde los niños del mañana soñarán / **Los cambios que vendrán***

- Literal translation:

Take me to the magic of the moment / On a glory night

Llévame a la magia del momento / De la gloria

Apart from these, we found linguistic compression, linguistic amplification and amplification among other ones:

- Linguistic compression. Here we observe how the phrase was reduced by reformulating it with fewer words eliminating *and* and *ever*.

*The world is closing in / **And did you ever think***

*Se achica el mundo más / **Quien iba a creer***

- Linguistic amplification. In this example we notice how in Spanish instead of the 1st person plural subject pronoun, first and second person singular pronouns are used, i.e. *tú y yo* instead of *nosotros*.

*And did you ever think / that **we** could be so close*

*Quien iba a creer / **Que fuéramos tú y yo***

- Amplification. In this case we notice how some information is added by introducing the word *río* before Moskva:

I follow the Moskva ? / Down to Gorky Park

*Por el **río** de Moskva / Bajo al Gorky Park*

In the following we chart we can see all the techniques used in this translation:

Wind of Change – Vientos de Cambio

Discursive creation	Modulation
Compensation	Generalization
Linguistic compression	Adaptation
Amplification	Literal translation
Reduction	Linguistic amplification

Christina Aguilera – Genie in a Bottle

The third song is “Genie in a Bottle” by the American singer Christina Aguilera, which was released in 1999.

Formal Analysis

As in previous examples that analysed, this song maintains the same number of verses or stanzas and the same number of lines, thus keeping the same structure. The number of syllables is the same in both versions apart from some lines that have just one more or one less syllable. However, something interesting to comment on is the difference of length between the lines in one verse. In this song we can see lines from 17 syllables to just 6.

Focusing on the chorus and comparing it in both versions we notice that in the original English version we have fewer lines (just 6) and they are longer than in the Spanish version, where we find 8 shorter lines ranging from 7 to 8 syllables.

With regard to the rhyme pattern, we notice that it is not a constant one. In verse one for instance we have slant rhyme in the first line with the words *tight* and *night*. Then the second line seems to rhyme with any other line, but lines 3 and 4 fulfil a perfect rhyme with end-of-line words *way* and *away*. Perhaps we could establish some sort of pattern if we consider that the second line (*Waiting for someone to release me*) rhymes with the fifth one ending with *baby*.

The second verse does have a rhyme scheme, unlike the first one, where lines one and two rhyme between them (*low / go*), line 3 could be rhyming with line 6 (*me / baby*), and lines 4 and five rhyme between them too (*light / tonight*):

*The music's banging and the lights down **low***
*Just one more dance and then we're good to **go***
*Waiting for someone who needs **me***
*Hormones racin' at the speed of **light***
*But that don't mean it's gotta be **tonight***
*Baby, baby, baby (Baby, baby, **baby**)*

And finally, the chorus has an A-AB-B pattern as we can see:

*If you wanna be with me baby, there's a price to **pay** A*
I'm a genie in a bottle (In a bottle, baby) –
*You gotta rub me the right **way** A*
*If you wanna be with me, I can make your wish come **true** B*
You gotta make a big impression (oh, yeah) –
*I gotta like what you **do** B*

In the Spanish version, if we pay attention to the first verse, we could establish again a sort of slant rhyme in the first line with the words *soledad* and *escapar*. But then, this first line, unlike what happens in the English version, does rhyme with lines 3 and 4, while line 2 rhymes with line 5, as we can see. On the other hand, in verse two the rhyme pattern is aabccb, where we have one more line.

Verse 1	Verse 2
<i>Un siglo llevo en soledad, atrapada, queriendo escapar A</i>	<i>Bailando nos domina la pasión a</i>

<i>Soñando que alguien me libere B</i>	<i>Nuestros impulsos fuera de control a</i>
<i>Me lanzas un beso y yo te quiero amar A</i>	<i>Es tan difícil contenerse b</i>
<i>Pero hay un precio que tendrás que pagar A</i>	<i>Y piensa que hoy tal vez sucederá c</i>
<i>Para que me entregue b</i>	<i>Pero yo sé que nada pasará c</i>
	<i>Tienes que quererme b</i>

Then, the chorus follows the pattern abcbadcd, in contrast with the English version where the lines are longer and 2 and 5 have no rhyme.

Si me quieres junto a ti

Frota bien y ya verás

Como un genio liberado

Haré tus sueños realidad

Si me quieres junto a ti

Gánate mi corazón

Tres deseos te concedo

Si me juras tu amor

Semantic Analysis

Regarding the meaning of the lyrics, the translation maintains the general story dealing with love. In fact, comparing the lines we can see that although there are adaptations, and in some cases some lines even disappear becoming something completely different, we do find literal translations too.

Within the translation techniques, again, the most used one is the discursive creation which is noticeable in many examples:

But that don't mean I'm gonna give it away / Baby, baby, baby

Pero hay un precio que tendrás que pagar / Para que me entregue

You gotta make a big impression (oh, yeah) / I gotta like what you do

Tres deseos te concedo / Si me juras tu amor

The music's banging and the lights down low / Just one more dance and then we're good to go

Bailando nos domina la pasión / Nuestros impulsos fuera de control

More techniques are used such as for instance amplification and reduction, linguistic compression, and modulation:

- Amplification. In this example we found that in Spanish the girl says that she wants to escape while in the English version we do not have this information.

I feel like I've been locked up tight for a century of lonely nights

*Un siglo llevo en soledad atrapada **queriendo escapar***

- Reduction. Here we can see how the crossed phrase in the English version is not included in the Spanish translation:

You're licking your lips and blowing kisses my way

Me lanzas un beso y yo te quiero amar

- Linguistic compression. We notice how these two phrases in bold mean the same, but the Spanish version uses fewer words:

*You gotta **rub me the right way***

Frota bien y ya verás

- Modulation. In this example there is a change in the focus related to the characters. While in the English version it is the boy who seems to be the focus (you) and the one who “moves” to be with the girl, in Spanish it is the girl who appears as the centre and the one the boy wants to move to be with him:

If you wanna be with me baby

Si me quieres junto a ti

Once more, the least used technique in this song by Christina Aguilera appears to be literal translation as we can only find one example, just at the beginning of the song:

Come on, come on

Vamos, vamos

In the following chart we can see the techniques used in this translation:

Genie in a Bottle – Genio Atrapado

Discursive creation	Compensation
Modulation	Adaptation
Amplification	Transposition
Linguistic compression	Linguistic amplification
Reduction	Literal translation
Generalization	

Bon Jovi – This ain’t a love song

The last song of this study is “This ain’t a love song” by Bon Jovi, a well-known American rock band. The song which is translated into Spanish as “Como yo nadie te ha amado”, was released in 1995 and it is the lead single of the album *These Days*.

Formal Analysis

Structurally, we have the same number of lines in both English and Spanish versions (in some verses we have a difference of just one line). In the Spanish version we find one more line in all the verses and one less line in the pre-chorus, while the chorus maintains the number.

Regarding the syllables, the chorus keeps the same number, but we observe that the meter is different in the rest of the verses.

In terms of the rhyme, this song has the most regular pattern of all the four we have analysed.

Verse one follows the pattern aaabb- and verse two rhyme is aaaabbbcc:

Then, the chorus lines rhyme the same (*gone / long / song*):

*If the love that I've got for you is **gone***

*And if the river I've cried ain't that **long***

*Then I'm wrong, yeah, I'm wrong, this ain't a love **song**.*

Surprisingly, in the Spanish version the rhyme pattern is very similar to the English version.

Thus, the first verse shares the pattern with the first verse of the English version but the second one differs a little as the majority of lines (except the last two ones) share rhyme: *eternidad / comenzar / más / sonar / intimidación / acabar / desafiar / igual / duele / baby*.

Then, again, the three lines of the chorus keep identical rhyme as in the English version, and we can even notice some similarity between the vocalic sounds in both versions.

Semantic analysis

Regarding the meaning, the general idea of a broken-heart song is kept but comparing the lines we can notice that inside they are slightly different.

Considering the translation techniques, our findings show that discursive creation is the one with the highest occurrence, once more:

I cried and I cried / There were nights that I died for you baby

*Lloré y lloré / **Y juré que no iba a perderte***

If the love that I've got for you is gone / And if the river I've cried ain't that long

Si mis lágrimas fueron en vano / Si al final yo te amé demasiado

Then I'm wrong, yeah I'm wrong, this ain't a love song

Como yo, como yo nadie te ha amado

Other techniques are modulation, adaptation and generalization:

- Modulation. We can see a change in the point of view; while in English nothing changes, in the Spanish version everything has changed:

*But you and I are renegades, **some things never change***

*Nos dejamos desafiar / **y hoy nada es igual***

- Adaptation. This could be interpreted as a linguistic compression too, but we can see that if we say *end of summer* the underlying meaning would be the arriving of the cold season:

*Should have seen **the end of summer** in your eyes*

*Ni **ese frío** en tus ojos al mirar*

- Generalization. In this example, we notice how the scope changed from mentioning a specific flower to just the general word (*flores*) in the Spanish version:

*I should have seen it coming when **roses** died*

*Yo no vi las **flores** marchitar*

In the following chart we can see the different techniques used in the elaboration of this translation:

This Ain't a Love Song – Como Yo Nadie te ha Amado

Discursive creation	Generalization
Modulation	Adaptation
Linguistic compression	Amplification
Reduction	Literal translation

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the previous work by several scholars and which forms the basis of the theoretical framework several scholars, it is obvious that the main factor affecting the translation of lyrics is the criterion of singability. Related to these, Low (2003) cites Richard Dyer-Bennet, who established these guidelines:

- The target text must be singable – otherwise any other virtues it has are meaningless.
- The target text must sound as if the music had been fitted to it, even though it was actually composed to fit the source text.
- The rhyme-scheme of the original poetry must be kept because it gives shape to the phrases.
- Liberties must be taken with the literal meaning when the first three requirements cannot otherwise be met. (Low, 2003: 91, cited in Beavitt, 2018: 85)

Therefore, after understanding and comparing several sources of information, when translating a song into another language, the translator must achieve a product that can be sung by the artist (taking into account his or her voice pitch, attitude, etc.), which seems to be written perfectly in concordance with the melody and whose meaning was kept although he or she is allowed to take some liberties when choosing the words.

However, although before researching about this topic, the first thought was that a translator's task is to work only with linguistic issues, the truth is that we have discovered that other factors are essential for a successful translation. As this study shows, the formal factors are a crucial part in the development of an acceptable product. Therefore, the translator must pay attention to the number of lines, number of syllables, the rhythm and the rhyme among other many things to assure a performable song identical in appearance to the original one.

Related to this, some scholars claim that there is a new concept of equivalence focused on the target culture and it has nothing to do with the principle of equivalence of Jakobson. However, thinking about the relationship between the formal and dynamic equivalence that Jakobson and Nida talked about, it seems that the equivalence effect is what a translator needs to elaborate this sort of task. In translating lyrics what we need is attention to both structure and style because of the melody (formal equivalence) and to meaning and effect because the original ones have to be kept (dynamic equivalence).

When analysing the semantic part of the selected songs, our findings show that the general meaning was kept and that it was easily identified. Nevertheless, when studying the different translation techniques, we could observe that the main one was discursive creation. This means that the majority of lines were re-done, completely transformed and have nothing to do with their equivalent ones in the original song. Therefore, a question arises: when translating songs, are we really translating or are we transforming? Related to this, Peter Low establishes the difference between these three types: 1. song translations (“extensive transfer of material from the source text, with a reasonably high degree of semantic fidelity, particularly with respect to its main features”), 2. adaptations (“extensive and significant departures from semantic fidelity”) and 3. replacement texts (“created to be used with a pre-existing melody, yet manifesting no semantic transfer from the text previously sung to that melody.”) (Low, 2013: 231, cited in Beavitt, 2018: 85). We could go further and try to know if the selected songs fit into one of these categories.

Another feature observed and the reason that resulted in our scope change is the difficulty of analysing the translation word by word when we are working with a whole poetic piece. The problem was about keeping the general meaning while changing particular elements thanks to the degree of freedom translators may have in this kind of task. Moreover, it becomes more difficult considering the fact that each verse must have the same number of lines, and each line

has to have the same number of syllables (or at least similar) in order to follow the same structure of the original one. Therefore, if we had translated word by word, the reality would be really different as the words would have a different number of syllables, and as we have seen in previous sections, as Burton Raffael (1928, cited in Apter & Herman, 2016) says, there is not a vocabulary correspondence between two languages, i.e. one word in English could be translated into Spanish with more than one.

Thus, when studying which translation techniques were used in the songs chosen, we find real data to support the information given by different scholars. The first idea is that because of the difficulty to isolate words in a meaningful whole, the technique of literal translation is one of the least used ones in the examples we have seen. As already mentioned, the fact of being limited by the formal factors and the non-correspondance between two languages, the use of a literal translation is almost impossible.

Another remarkable issue when dealing with the translation of lyrics, and a point that we have experienced while studying our examples, is that the compensation technique is used on all the four selected songs. Compensation, that is moving some elements from the ST to other places into the TT because of formal or other reasons, is a common one as it is necessary to keep the meaning but it is not so important to keep the elements in a fixed place. We could therefore see how a line that appears in second place in one of the verses of the original lyrics is moved to the last line of the Spanish version, for instance. The importance remains in that it changed place, but it is there, and the meaning is not lost.

Although it was not mentioned in the analysis section, the device of repetition needs to be explained. In all the four songs we could see that there is a consistent repetition of lines or words that give structure to the song as a whole. In addition, this device exists in all the created songs, and even in many poems. According to Johnson et al. (2013), this device helps the intelligibility of a sung text. For instance, we could see how some parts such as the chorus and

the pre- and post-choruses are repeated more than once, and even how, in spite of the difference of the verses, there could be at least some word, line, sound or even category-repeated. For instance, in Beyoncé's "If I Were a Boy", the same phrase (*If I were a boy*) is at the beginning of the chorus but also at the beginning of the two verses. In Scorpion's "Wind of Change", *I follow the Moskva / Down to Gorky Park / Listening to the wind of change* are the three first lines of the verse 1 but they are also lines 4, 5 and 6 of verse 3. In addition, *wind of change* is repeated in the last line of every verse and chorus. In her chorus, Christina Aguilera repeats the same syntactic construction twice to give structure to it: *If you wanna be with me*. Bon Jovi's song has two choruses and the group decided to begin them both with a conditional sentence: *If the love that I've got for you is gone / If the pain that I'm feeling so strong*.

While working on this study, we found that on comparing lines in both English and Spanish versions, they did not necessarily have the same number of syllables. Then, if metric and meter is one of the essential factors to make the lyrics exactly coincide with the already created melody, how can there be any difference? The answer is found in a paper by Beavitt (2018) who explains the dichotomy between syllabism and melisma. This is the reason for having this difference. If we have fewer syllables in the translation than in the original, it can be because the vowels are elongated and last more than one musical note. On the other hand, if we have more syllables than in the original it can be because in the original one the vowels were elongated but in the translation it was necessary to make them shorter to last just one beat to convey the meaning. However, citing Johnson et al. (2013), Beavitt (2018) explains that the more syllables per musical tone, the less intelligible a song may be. Nevertheless, he also points out that "melisma continues to be a feature of contemporary western vocal styles, especially as popularised by Whitney Houston [...] [it] has influenced a whole generation of popular singers including Beyonce, Christina Aguilera and Jennifer Hudson" (87), the first two of this list precisely being the subject of this study.

Focusing on the research questions stated at the beginning of this study, the results show that the most used translation technique is discursive creation since it gives certain liberty needed by the translator. However, there are other techniques usually used in these cases such as the following ones that found in all the four songs selected:

- Modulation
- Amplification
- Reduction
- Linguistic compression

In relation to the question of other factors affecting the task of the translator, obviously we have found that the role of these melodic and formal limits is as crucial as the selection of vocabulary.

Finally, considering the gain or loss in the translated version, we think that there is loss but regarding details that in the end do not affect greatly the general meaning. Nevertheless, it is not clear if there is gain, as there is not a big difference and in the majority of cases there are lines that are lost. A possible answer for this could be the characteristics of the Spanish language when options include longer words than in English, and so the translator needs to find shorter synonyms or to even eliminate some information to keep the whole meaning. This study has given us the opportunity to reflect on the difficulties of a very specialised field of translation studies, one which is probably ignored by the general public, but worthy of academic study and research. It could be of great interest further studies on this topic.

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