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REVISTA DE LA
SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA
DE LENGUAS MODERNAS

selm

Nº5   2018

REVISTA LINGUAE

REVISTA LINGUAE

Revista *Linguae - Revista de la Sociedad Española de Lenguas Modernas, 5*

Diseño Cubierta: Rocío Márque Garrido
Maquetación: Jacobo Ángel López

Depósito Legal: SE - 2318-2014
Printed in Spain

EL PAPEL DE LA RESTRICCIÓN NULA COMO FUERZA IMPULSORA HACIA UNA APROXIMACIÓN LITERAL DE LA TRADUCCIÓN

José Luis Martí Ferriol, Universitat Jaume I
martij@uji.es

Resumen:

El concepto de restricción pasó a primer plano en traducción audiovisual como consecuencia de la contribución de Mayoral et al. (1988), a su vez basada en la de Titford (1982). Martí Ferriol (2006, 2007, 2010, 2013) desarrolló una nueva clasificación de restricciones tomando como referencia las publicaciones anteriores. Estos estudios del autor tenían como intención describir el método de traducción para doblaje y subtitulación, e introdujeron el concepto de «restricción nula», para ayudar a denominar la ausencia de restricciones, de cualquier tipo, en un texto audiovisual. El presente artículo toma como punto de partida las principales conclusiones de investigaciones anteriores, al tiempo que desarrolla el concepto de restricción nula en dos nuevas direcciones. En primer lugar, la restricción nula se combina con todos los demás tipos de restricciones, para así generar un primer parámetro que indica la dificultad (o facilidad) de traducción de un texto origen audiovisual («grado porcentual de facilidad de traducción»). A continuación, este parámetro se exporta a textos escritos, por medio de la combinación de la restricción nula solo con las restricciones que aparecen en este tipo de textos. En segundo lugar, se investiga la traducción de textos en los casos en que aparece la restricción nula. Este aspecto se cuantifica por medio de un segundo parámetro («grado porcentual de traducción literal y fidelidad»). El presente estudio muestra correlaciones estadísticas significativas entre los dos parámetros arriba mencionados en diferentes situaciones.

Palabras clave: restricción nula, traducción literal, fidelidad lingüística, facilidad de traducción, textos audiovisuales/escritos

THE ROLE OF NULL CONSTRAINT AS A DRIVING FORCE TOWARDS A LITERAL APPROACH TO TRANSLATION

Abstract:

The concept of constraint was brought to the fore for audiovisual translation by Mayoral et al. (1988), based on Titford (1982). Martí Ferriol (2006, 2007, 2010, 2013) developed a new classification of constraints using these previous publications as a reference. These studies by the author were aimed at describing the method of translation for dubbing and subtitling, and they introduced the concept of 'null constraint', to help term the lack of constraints, of any kind, in an audiovisual text. This article uses the most important conclusions of previous research as a starting point, as it develops the concept of null constraint in two new ways. Firstly, the null constraint is combined with other types of constraints, to thus generate a first parameter which indicates the difficulty of an audiovisual source text to be translated ('percentage degree of translation easiness'). This parameter is then exported to written texts, by combining the null constraint only with the constraint types that do appear in them. Secondly, translation of texts is investigated in particular instances where the null constraint rules. This is quantified by means of a second parameter ('percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity'). This study finds significant statistical correlations between the two above mentioned parameters in different scenarios.

Keywords: null constraint, literal translation, linguistic fidelity, translation easiness, audiovisual/written texts.

Introduction

This study is based on author's previous research, whose main results may be found in literature dated 2006, 2007, 2010 and 2013; all of which is devoted to audiovisual translation, and particularly, to the translation method for dubbing and subtitling, which was analyzed for a specific film (sub)genre (American independent films). Some conclusions of these publications (specifically, the ones that have to do with translation methods and literal translation) have been cited in Martínez Sierra (2017). Of the four publications by the author mentioned above, the second one is written in English language, and is therefore cited below, just for the sake of easier understanding. A fragment of the abstract of this paper (Martí Ferriol, 2007, p. 171) states:

> An *Empirical and Descriptive Study of the Translation Method for Dubbing and Subtitling* is the title of a doctoral thesis submitted in November 2006. This research project developed a theoretical framework where the notion of translation method was defined in terms of a graphical and parametrical representation as a function of three parameters: constraints active in audiovisual translation, translation norms and translation techniques. The object of study consisted of several independent American films shown in Spain, in dubbed and subtitled versions, in the period between 2001 and 2004. […] The results and conclusions of the study were obtained by using rigorous statistical tools, which showed the similarities and differences between the translation methods for both the dubbed and the subtitled versions.

As it turns out, the main theoretical and methodological idea which underlies the whole cited research is that translation, and its practice by means of a 'translation method', can be understood as the process of solving problems of different kinds (termed as 'constraints'), by finding solutions which may be microtextual ones ('translation techniques') or recurrent ones ('translation norms'). Section 3 (Martí Ferriol, 2007), entitled 'Theoretical framework and classifications for the parameters', provides different typologies of norms, translation techniques and constraints, in that order, which are also defined, as part of the analysis model.

As far as constraints are concerned, the last constraint considered is referred to in inverted commas as 'void' constraint, and it is defined as follows (Martí Ferriol, 2007, p. 176):

> On the basis of our own previous research (Martí Ferriol, 2003), a new kind of constraint type was conceived for the translation phase: the 'void constraint', which could be defined as a 'lack of presence (or absence) of constraints'.

Martí Ferriol (2003) was a preliminary descriptive research study which intended to identify translation norms in one film (later included as part of an extended corpus for the doctoral thesis which consisted of 5 films). This early study already included constraints as a key parameter to be considered as a must for descriptive norm identification. As early as this, it was surprising to find a significant percentage of samples where no kind of constraint was present. A final justification for the inclusion in following studies of this type of constraint (it is now preferred to term it in English language as 'null', rather than 'void'), can be found,

for example, in Martí Ferriol (2013, pp.142-144), where the number of instances and percentages of samples without a constraint in the 2003 research work is documented.

Subsequent compilation and analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) of samples in the extended corpus proved the fact that the presence of the null constraint was important. From a qualitative standpoint, (Martí Ferriol, 2010, p. 193) highlights the frequency of samples, both for dubbing and subtitling, where the null constraint is present, and also the fact that it is in those cases where translation solutions for these two audiovisual modes (dubbing and subtitling) are different. Similarly, (Martí Ferriol, 2013, p. 198) quantifies this presence: half the amount of the total constraints (182 out of 365) are instances of the null constraint, when both modes are considered together. This frequency is higher in subtitling (104 out of 177) than in dubbing (78 out of 188).

The main findings of the research work documented in the original thesis format were presented in a summarized version in English (2007), while the complete qualitative and quantitative findings were published, in that order, and in Spanish language, in Martí Ferriol (2010) and in Martí Ferriol (2013). All in all, it became obvious that the translation method was different for dubbing and for subtitling in the absence of constraints (or when the null constraint was present). This was summarized in Martí Ferriol (2007, p. 180):

> The translation method is only different in the presence of two constraint types: formal and void. When the formal or void constraints are active, the translation method for dubbing tends to be interpretative-communicative, while the method for subtitling is more literal.

and later concluded qualitatively in Martí Ferriol (2010, p. 217):

> La restricción nula supone un caso claro: […] el método de traducción es de tipo interpretativo-comunicativo para doblaje y de tipo literal para subtitulación ante la ausencia de restricciones.

> The null constraint is a clear example: […] the translation method is interpretative-communicative for dubbing, while it is literal for subtitling, when there are no active constraints (my translation)

The brief summary of conclusions so far, which stems from previous research, has then highlighted two main facts: first, that the presence of the null constraint was important in sample collection and analysis; and second, that the null constraint had a decisive impact on translation method identification.

For the objectives of this contribution (listed below at the end of this section), three additional aspects of previous research need to be pointed out, since they are vital to its implementation: one refers to translation norms, another one is related to translation techniques, and a latter one has to do with 'natural translation'. All of them will be further considered, while combined with the null constraint. Their impact had already been envisaged in a qualitative way, and so it was documented.

As for the first aspect, the norm 'linguistic fidelity', it was derived from Goris' (1993) 'secondary norms', and it was defined in Martí Ferriol (2007, p. 174) as "maintaining the same uncomplicated grammatical structures as in the source text". Regarding its impact and relationship with the null constraint, this was already highlighted in Martí Ferriol (2010, pp. 214-215), when it was observed that linguistic fidelity was the identified norm in many cases where the null constraint was active, and that this happened both for dubbing and subtitling. Additionally, it was understood that this norm would make more sense in translation assignments where the two involved languages were close.

As for the second aspect, the one which has to do with translation techniques, three different types will be considered ('word-for-word translation', 'one-by-one translation' and 'literal translation'). The distinction among these three techniques stems from Newmark (1988), and their use was justified in the author's previous research (for example, in Martí Ferriol, 2013, pp. 102-105).

As for the third aspect, it has to do with the concept of 'natural translation', understood here as in Mayoral (2003), who states that in absence of constraints, 'natural translation' is possible, although it should not be considered as a translation technique. Another author who mentions the concept of natural translation is Hurtado (2001, p. 644), who defines it in the glossary of her work as:

Habilidad innata y rudimentaria de mediación entre lenguas que tiene cualquier hablante plurilingüe (Harris, 1973, 1977, 1980; Harris y Sherwood, 1978)

Innate and rudimentary skill to mediate among languages, a skill every multilingual speaker has (my translation).

This list of additional theoretical concepts, which stem from previous research, and which have been selected to be connected with null constraint in this proposal, are then three: first, the norm 'linguistic fidelity'; second, the three translation techniques with a literal orientation; and finally, in third place, 'natural translation'. This means that empirical data of these five variables will be combined, in an intent to provide new insight into the translation process, in cases when no specific problems can be identified (null constraint).

It is important at this point to highlight the fact that there is a lack of bibliography, as far as the null constraint and its impact in translation are concerned. An extensive search has been carried out, with the intention to identify papers or publications which deal with the topic, but the only contributions found have been the ones by de Higes (2014, 2016). This discovery may help understand the need to recur to self-citation in the present publication. It also indicates that the importance of null constraint as a driving force in translation practice has been ignored so far, which has ended up being an important motivation for the development of this particular contribution.

Two main objectives are pursued in this study:

- To generate a parameter (the first one) which indicates the easiness of a source text (either audiovisual or written) to be translated, by combining the amount of constraints of all types (null and other), found in it. This parameter will be termed as 'percentage degree of translation easiness'

- To prove quantitatively and rigorously the following hypothesis: "In instances where the null constraint is present (no other constraint types appear), translation solutions are mostly realized by using both translation techniques of the literal fashion and 'natural' translation, which altogether lead to the norm of linguistic fidelity". The amounts of these solutions are combined

to generate a new parameter (the second one), coined as the 'percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity'

These objectives have the intention to try and show with rigorous data that a literal approach to translation is feasible (and also common practice), especially in situations where no specific translation problems are identified. This idea may seem intuitive and related to common sense, but the value added by this particular contribution may be to prove it with empirical data and statistical tools.

1. Materials and Methodology: definition of new parameters

Empirical data used in this new research effort is the one collected for Martí Ferriol (2006), or at least some pieces of it: quantitative data which indicates the presence of constraints of all kinds (including, especially, the null constraint), data obtained for literal translation techniques (the three above mentioned kinds), as well as and instances of natural translation; and finally, data for the presence of the norm known as 'linguistic fidelity'. All the data used in this study has been obtained by making dedicated queries to the previous research database, and the reader is encouraged to reproduce them by going through the same exercise.

All the examples which generated these numbers can be found in Martí Ferriol (2006, pp. 341-500), an extensive Excel spreadsheet which includes 480 samples of 5 films. These samples documented instances of 365 constraints, plus 182 examples of null constraint (Martí Ferriol, 2013, p. 197), 439 norms, 114 of those correspond to linguistic fidelity, (Martí Ferriol, 2013, p. 198), and 758 translation techniques, 104 of the literal kind (Martí Ferriol, 2013, p. 200). The reader is again encouraged to review the mentioned spreadsheet, where all the samples include the source text in English and its translation into Spanish, both for dubbing and subtitling. Additionally, in each sample, the presence of constraints, translation techniques and translation norms are marked, while each one of them is identified according to the taxonomies proposed for the study.

A summary of the figures for the different constraint types can be found in Martí Ferriol (2013, p. 203). This data is presented below again (Table

1), as it is the starting point to generate new results for this paper (see Section 2 below). The linguistic contents in the table header have been translated into English. The table includes values of different constraint types for both the dubbed (DUB) and subtitled (SUB) versions of the five considered films.

Table 1: Presence of constraint types in the corpus under study

CONSTRAINT TYPE	Ms'B[1] (DUB)[2]	Ms'B (SUB)	ItB (DUB)	ItB (SUB)	TH (DUB)	TH (SUB)	E (DUB)	E (SUB)	LiT (DUB)	LiT (SUB)	TOTAL
FORMAL	18	19	28	26	21	22	15	6	22	20	197
LINGUISTIC	10	10	1	1	3	3	6	6	2	2	44
ICONIC	8	8	7	7	6	6	2	2	6	6	58
SOCIO-CULTURAL	6	6	11	11	4	4	6	6	6	6	66
TOTAL (excluding null)	42	43	47	45	34	35	29	20	36	34	365
NULL	21	22	14	18	22	28	15	22	6	14	182

In order to accomplish the first objective, the creation of a parameter which specifies the difficulty (or easiness) of a text to be translated, it is proposed to define a ratio (expressed in percentage) of the quantity of null constraints over the total amount of constraints. However, if it is to be so defined, its physical meaning would really indicate the 'easiness' of the translation task, since this percentage would give an idea of the number of samples which do not present a translation problem, of any kind (the ones with null constraint), as compared to the total amount of them. This new parameter will be termed from now on as 'percentage degree of translation easiness'.

As for the second objective, new queries to the Excel table in Martí Ferriol (2006, pp. 341-500) had to be made, in order to obtain the specific information related to linguistic fidelity, and also to the combination of translation techniques of the literal sort with the instances of natural translation (these latter ones are marked as "-" in the technique column of the 2006 table).

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[1] Ms'B (*Monsters' Ball*), ItB (*In the Bedroom*), TH (*The Hours*), E (*Elephant*), LiT (*Lost in Translation*)

[2] DUB (*Dubbing*), SUB (*Subtitling*)

An explanation of the physical meaning of this new ratio (also expressed in percentage), which will be termed from now on as 'percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity', is obviously necessary.

Since translation solutions must be reached both on a microtextual level (by means of translation techniques), as well as on a more (macro)textual level (as inferred norms based on certain techniques), it makes sense to combine both concepts, techniques and norms, in a single new variable, if the research intention is to carry out a quantitative and statistical analysis. From this perspective, a ratio seems to be a reasonable approach for this necessary combination. In the numerator, we use the figure obtained as the addition of the three translation techniques which show a literal orientation, plus the number of instances where a natural translation approach has been followed. When added up, the figure obtained from these four values depicts the amount of translation solutions when the translator intervention was kept to a minimum. In these particular cases, the translator expertise and competence were not really challenged, since he/she simply used his/her linguistic knowledge to convey a 'least effort solution'. Franco (2009) refers to this phenomenon as "economy of effort", when he theorizes over interference in scientific and technical translation, although the same reasoning could be applied to any kind of translation assignment:

> [...] the economy of effort, which seems to make translators, who usually work under very tight deadlines and for a rather modest remuneration, tend to deviate from the source text only when they consider it really necessary, since conservative translation is the fastest and most economical way of working.

When this happens, it is more than likely that the translation solution will end up being a rendering where the lexical content will be, more often than not, the linguistic equivalence which could be easily found in a bilingual dictionary, and where the syntactic structure of the target fragment will resemble the one of the source language grammar. This latter characteristic, also an indication of the above mentioned 'least effort solution', will be materialized in the form of the norm considered here, the linguistic fidelity, which is to appear on the denominator of the new parameter, expressed here, as mentioned, in the form of a ratio.

As a consequence, it makes sense to consider that both elements in the ratio (numerator and denominator) portray behaviours which are

consistent if analyzed from a translation process standpoint, while at the same time depict the action of referring the particular (microtextual) solutions, in the numerator, to the more general (or recursive, normative) ones in the denominator.

2. Results

For the first research objective, and based on the data in Table 1 of the previous section, a new table (Table 2) was created:

Table 2: Unnormalized degree of easiness in the corpus under study

Film	Samples	Total Constraint	Null Constraint	Null Constraint / Total Constraint (%)
Ms'B	112	85	43	51
ItB	78	92	32	35
TH	106	69	50	72
E	106	56	37	66
LiT	78	70	20	29

Inspection of the data shown in Table 2, in comparison with the data which appears in Table 1, indicates that the quantity of constraints (both total and null) have been added up for both translation modes: dubbing and subtitling. This is a decision which was made during the definition of the research methodology involved in this study, in an attempt to consider each of the 5 the audiovisuals texts (films), as a whole unit, one which includes both dubbing and subtitling data.

According to this, of the five films, the one that posed the fewest translation problems was *The Hours* (TH, the one with the highest value of percentage degree of easiness, 72%), while the one with the most problems was *Lost in Translation* (LiT), with the lowest value (29%) for the new parameter.

Further inspection of the data in Table 2 shows that the number of samples gathered for each film has also been included in the table. As

one can easily see, the contribution of each film to the total number of 480 samples was not the same. As a consequence, it was considered methodologically correct (and also necessary) to normalize the value of the new percentage of translation easiness as a function of every particular contribution, as expressed by the number of samples for a particular film in relation to the total number of samples (480). For the first film in the table (*Monsters'* Ball, Ms'B), for example, the associated normalization calculation would be as follows: 51 * 112/480 = 12. When this is done with all the films, the results shown in Table 3 are obtained:

Table 3: Normalized degree of easiness in the corpus under study

Film	Samples	Total Constraint	Null Constraint	Null Constraint / Total Constraint (%)	Normalized Null Constraint / Total Constraint (%)
Ms'B	112	85	43	51	12
ItB	78	92	32	35	6
TH	106	69	50	72	16
E	106	56	37	66	15
LiT	78	70	20	29	5

This normalization process did not produce any significant change as far as the degree of easiness of translation for the films is concerned: the one that still poses the fewest translation problems is *The Hours* (highest normalized percentage of easiness, 16%, although *Elephant* (E) is now closer with a value of 15%), while the one with the most problems still is *Lost in Translation*, which shows the lowest value (5%) for the new normalized parameter (although *In the Bedroom* –ItB- is now closer with a value of 6%).

If we were to extrapolate this same concept to texts whose mode is not dual (i.e. to written texts), it would make sense to generate a table where the column "total constraint" did not include the constraint types which are specific of audiovisual translation (i.e. formal and iconic), and whose values would only be calculated as an addition of linguistic and socio-cultural constraints (114, in total). Such a table (Table 4, obtained

obviously from the data in Table 1) would look as follows, once it has been normalized:

Table 4: Normalized degree of easiness in the corpus under study if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones

Film	Samples	Total Constraint (not AVT)	Null Constraint	Null Constraint / Total Constraint (not AVT) (%)	Normalized Null Constraint / Total Constraint (%)
Ms'B	112	32	43	134	31
ItB	78	24	32	133	22
TH	106	14	50	357	79
E	106	28	37	132	29
LiT	78	16	20	125	20

It is obvious that one should to be very careful when evaluating the data included in the previous table. Its meaning might as well be questionable, and it could happen that a hypothetical search of a real meaning of the values included in it could be, at least, doubtful in itself. This would be the case because the data in Table 4 has been extracted from texts which are, in fact, audiovisual, and as such they were analysed. But still, it would make sense to try and convert them into written texts if, for example, the exercise of translating their film scripts without any audiovisual content as a support material was considered. In such a scenario, problems related to formal constraints for dubbing and subtitling would be ignored, because they would not be there, and the same would happen with problems related to iconic codes (iconic constraints). Film script translation (with no audiovisual support material) is in fact a real exercise, one similar to the one which is put into practice, for instance, when opera librettos are translated.

From the perspective of research practical aspects, and since no empirical data of written texts was available, it is necessary to handle this data with care. This means that the conclusions derived from this sort of manipulation, if any, will have to be deemed as very preliminary and only tentative. The methodology, however, may open research

avenues for other scholars who do have the possibility to carry out an exercise like the one proposed here, but with real written texts.

For the second research objective, in an attempt to elaborate data which corresponded to the percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity, initial source data were queried. The results obtained are shown in the table below:

Table 5: Unnormalized degree of translation literality and fidelity in the corpus under study

Film	Samples	Linguistic Fidelity	Literal Techniques + Natural Translation	(Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity
Ms'B	112	24	19	0,79
ItB	78	5	1	0,20
TH	106	3	3	1
E	106	4	3	0,75
LiT	78	4	2	0,50

A quick inspection of the data shown in Table 5 indicates that the number of samples gathered for each film has also been included in the table. As pointed out above, the contribution of each film to the total numbers of 480 samples is not the same. Again, it was considered a methodologically sound decision to normalize the value of the new ratio as a function of the contribution based on sample count. Additionally, the new normalized ratio should be expressed in percentage values (the percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity, in an attempt aimed at consistency when compared to the definition of the first parameter in Table 3). When all this was done, the results shown in Table 6 were obtained:

Table 6: Normalized degree of translation literality and fidelity in the corpus under study

Film	Samples	Linguistic Fidelity	Literal Techniques + Natural translation	(Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity	Normalized (Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity (%)
Ms'B	112	24	19	0,79	18
ItB	78	5	1	0,20	3
TH	106	3	3	1	22
E	106	4	3	0,75	17
LiT	78	4	2	0,50	8

The normalization process, again considered necessary, has not produced any changes as far as the relative values of the new calculated ratios, if results in Table 5 and Table 6 are compared: the film with the highest normalized ratio of literality and linguistic fidelity is, very interestingly, *The Hours* (22%), while the one with the lowest one is *In the Bedroom*, with a value of 3%.
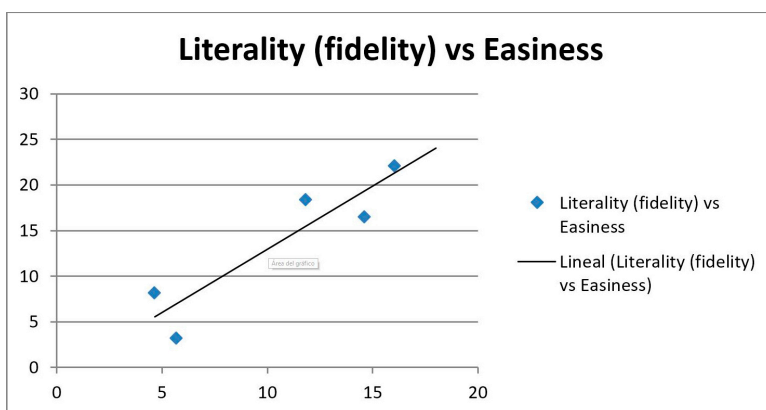
Additionally, for the second research objective, it may seem reasonable to try to find a correlation (as well as a regression) between our new variables (the 'degrees'), both for the case of audiovisual texts and for the one of written ones. Results obtained from Tables 3 and 6 (for audiovisual texts), in the sense that the film *The Hours* is the one with highest percentage degree of translation easiness and also the one with the highest percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity, seems to be a good motivation to proceed in this direction.

In the case of audiovisual texts, the values to be considered are the ones shown in the table below, which have been extracted from Table 3 and Table 6, respectively:

Table 7: Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness

Film	Normalized Null Constraint / Total Constraint (%) Percentage Degree of Translation Easiness	Normalized (Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity (%) Percentage Degree of Translation Literality and Fidelity
Ms'B	12	18
ItB	6	3
TH	16	22
E	15	17
LiT	5	8

A graphical representation of these values, by means of a X-Y Plot, looks as follows:

Literality (fidelity) vs Easiness

◆ Literality (fidelity) vs Easiness

— Lineal (Literality (fidelity) vs Easiness)

Graph 1. Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness and its linear estimation

Statistical calculations provided by Excel allow the possibility to try and obtain a correlation value for these sets of data. The value obtained

for the correlation is an acceptable 0,919, which indicates that there may be a physical relationship between both variables.

Such a result justifies the attempt to try and make a linear regression calculation as well, since the values in Graph 1 seem to be situated around a straight line (as the one portrayed in the same Graph, and generated by the corresponding Excel tool). When this is done, the resulting $R2$ value is 0,844 (which may be considered good enough, when real empirical data are considered), and the slope of the linear estimation (m), which establishes the linear relationship between the independent variable (percentage degree of translation easiness) and the dependent variable (percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity) is 1,313. This latter value opens the possibility of making predictions of values of the percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity, if values of percentage of translation easiness are available.

In case of written texts, or as the legend of Table 4 states, "if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones", the values to be used are the ones shown in the table below, which have been extracted from Table 4 and Table 6, respectively:

Table 8: Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones

Film	Normalized Nula / Total (not AVT) / Total Constraint (%) Percentage Degree of Translation Easiness	Normalized (Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity (%) Percentage Degree of Translation Literality and Fidelity
Ms'B	31	18
ItB	22	3
TH	79	22
E	29	17
LiT	20	8

A graphical representation of these values, by means of a X-Y Plot, looks as follows:
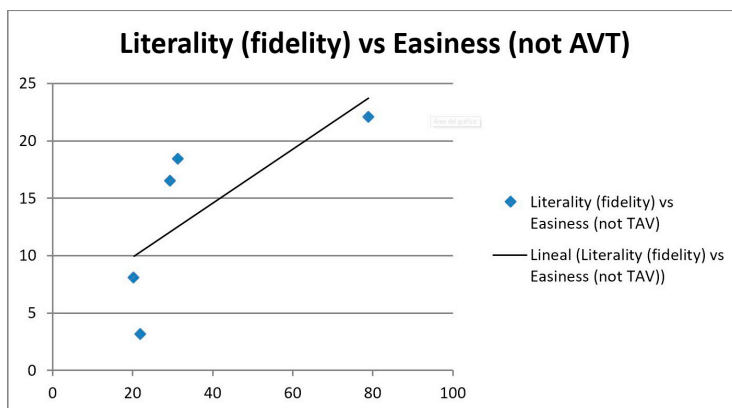
Graph 2. Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness and its linear estimation if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones

Statistical calculations provided by Excel allow us to calculate a correlation value for these sets of data. The calculated value for the correlation is not acceptable, because it is 0,735, and this indicates that there is not a physical relationship between both variables. Such a result would not justify the attempt to try a linear regression calculation. Still, the Excel functionality for that purpose has been activated and shown in Graph 2, only to show visually that the points in the graph are not located around a hypothetical straight line.

Visual inspection of Graph 2 indicates that, of the five points, one seems to be an outlier: it is the one located in the upper right part of the graph, with values of (79, 22). According to Table 7, this point corresponds to the data for the film *The Hours,* previously identified in both scenarios (both audiovisual texts and written texts) as the one that posed the fewest translation problems, according to the data in Table 3 and 4. For this particular case, when the film *The Hours* is not considered as an audiovisual text (or when it is considered as a written one), the value of the percentage degree of translation easiness becomes very high (79), as compared with the other four (31, 22, 29, 30), which makes

the point for this particular film look like an outlier, and then a possible candidate for its elimination. For some reason, the research exercise proposed when trying to consider audiovisual texts as written ones, by eliminating figures associated with formal and iconic constraints, has had more impact on this particular film, the one that showed the least number of translation problems, but also the highest degree of literality and fidelity in their translation solutions. It may be that the conversion here proposed has had an increased impact of one text of such characteristics. As mentioned, it has been difficult to associate a real meaning to this research exercise, other than the one of considering the possibility of translating film scripts of the corresponding films without any audiovisual support. Still, it is considered interesting, just for the sake of trying to extrapolate the promising results obtained for audiovisual texts to written texts, although just from a research exercise standpoint, with no intention of drawing any conclusions whatsoever, to proceed with the exercise further by eliminating the outlier value for the film *The Hours*. The results thus obtained, obviously, will have to be handled with utmost care. But this exercise might as well be a meaningful one, if considered just as a methodological proposal, if an initiative similar to the one presented here is envisaged and put into practice by other researchers who deal with "proper" texts in written mode.

As a consequence, and although the number of points used for correlations in this paper is already close to the minimum which might be considered as acceptable (5), it is then suggested to remove the outlier and go through the statistical exercise again, but with only four points (all films except *The Hours*).

For this, a table similar to Table 7 could be used. However, the numbers must be updated, because the normalization process must be carried out with a lower number of samples (374 instead of 480), since the 106 samples of *The Hours* (see Table 2, for example) cannot be taken into account.

In this modified proposal of the second case (written texts, excluding the film *The Hours*), the values to be considered are the ones shown in the table below:

Table 9: Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones (excluding the film *The Hours*)

Film	Normalized Nula / Total (not AVT, not TH) / Total Constraint (%)	Normalized (Literal Techniques + Natural TR) / Linguistic Fidelity (%)
Ms'B	40	24
ItB	28	4
E	37	21
LiT	26	10

A graphical representation of these values, by using a X-Y Plot, looks as follows:
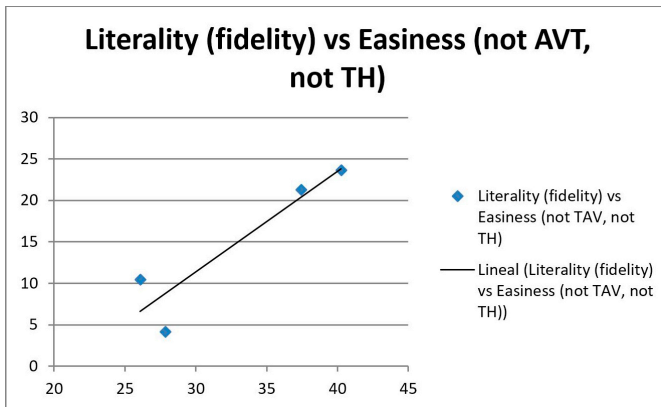
Graph 3. Percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity as a function of the percentage degree of translation easiness and its linear estimation if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones (excluding the film *The Hours*)

Statistical tools provided by Excel allowed the calculation of a correlation value for these sets of data. The value obtained for the correlation is an acceptable 0,926, slightly higher than the one for the case of audiovisual texts.

Such a result would justify an attempt to make a linear regression calculation (as the one shown is Graph 3, as provided by Excel calculations tools). The resulting R2 value is 0,858 (higher than the one for audiovisual texts), while the slope of the linear estimation (m), which establishes the linear relationship between the independent variable (percentage degree of translation easiness) and the dependent variable (percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity), if texts are not considered as audiovisual ones (and excluding the film *The Hours*) is 0,478. As compared to the case of audiovisual texts, this slope is about one third of the value obtained before for audiovisual texts (1,313).

3. Discussion

The contents of this section call for a thorough explanation of the conclusions which may be drawn from the data gathered and generated in the previous one, an exercise which must be carried out carefully, if the research implications of these findings are to be given the value they deserve.

Empirical data used here comes originally from a case-study, be it with a considerable amount of data, in the particular case of a specific (sub) genre, and applied to two audiovisual translation modes: dubbing and subtitling. The intent to widen the focus of study to non-audiovisual texts has also been attempted here, and the research methodological decisions associated with it have been, hopefully, properly justified. It is obvious that this extrapolation to written texts is questionable, but it should be considered as a research exercise with the only intention to open new research avenues, an exercise which has been carried out with available data. All in all, and for both research objectives, the conclusions explained below might only be generalized or extrapolated to bigger corpora with utmost care.

For the first research objective, the new parameter 'percentage degree of easiness of translation', once defined, has been used as an independent variable in all the calculations along the study, i.e. translation scenarios where the lack of constraints (or problems) is the case. However, some conclusions may also be stated for this degree, in itself.

As originally understood, this percentage degree of easiness was calculated for what we might call 'real corpus scenario': one with 480 samples obtained from five films, with 365 instances of constraints of all kinds, and 182 cases (half of the previous figure) where no constraint had been detected (null constraint). Normalized values for this parameter appear in Table 3, and vary between values of 5% and 16%. Altogether, it seems that the percentage of samples where no problems were found, in the case of audiovisual translation for dubbing and subtitling, is potentially low. In other words, samples of audiovisual texts to be translated for dubbing and subtitling are bound to show translation problems of all kinds. One might also say that audiovisual translation assignments show a somewhat low degree of translation easiness.

As an additional research exercise, this percentage degree of easiness was also calculated for what we might call 'modified corpus scenario': one with 480 samples obtained from five films, with 114 instances of linguistic and socio-cultural constraints, and 182 cases of null constraint. Normalized values for this parameter appear in Table 4, and vary between values of 22% and 79%. It is interesting to point out, for this particular case, that the instances when null constraint appears for the five films are much higher than the ones of linguistic and socio-cultural ones, when considered together. In fact, if one followed the reasoning proposed in the previous section when these calculations were made, it could be stated that the percentage degree of translation easiness for linguistic and socio-cultural problems in the case of film script rough translation assignments for dubbing and subtitling may vary, although it should still be considered as significant, given their values.

One might then conclude, that complete audiovisual translation assignments as a whole are much more demanding, as far as problem solution is concerned, than film script rough translation assignments, both for dubbing and subtitling, when considered as a whole. In terms of the first parameter, the percentage degree of easiness, it is much lower in the first case than in the second one (about 3 to 4 times lower). In other words: the percentage of problems that stem from iconic or formal constraints amount to about 70% of the overall problems which may appear in an audiovisual translation assignment for dubbing and/ or subtitling, while that the other 30% is associated to linguistic and socio-cultural constraints. Every audiovisual translator may be aware of this from their own experience, and market audiovisual translation

assignment fees should be accordingly adjusted. The value this study may have added for this particular aspect of professional practice would be its confirmation with empirical data and rigorous calculations.

For the second research objective, we can conclude that the hypothesis originally stated has been confirmed, at least for the case of the 'real corpus scenario' (audiovisual texts). As statistical data has shown, in instances where the null constraint is present (and no other constraint types appear), translation solutions are mostly realized by using translation techniques of the literal fashion, as well as 'natural' translation, which altogether lead to the norm of linguistic fidelity. The presence of the null constraint has been quantified by the new percentage degree of easiness of translation, while the co-occurrence of translation solutions has been quantified by means of the other new parameter, the so-called percentage degree of translation literality and fidelity. As it turns out, qualitative conclusions as documented in previous research on this corpus (Martí Ferriol 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013), have now been confirmed quantitatively and statistically.

As for the second objective, for the case of written texts, one should be very careful when drawing conclusions. In first place, because these 'written texts' have been associated with film scripts, in an attempt to assign a meaningful interpretation to the research methodological decisions taken along the study. However, it is obvious that this is a subjective interpretation and thus prone to all kinds of criticism. Although scripts are written texts, and they may be translated without the support of audiovisual materials (as it sometimes happens), it is doubtful that these translation assignments could be associated with the ones for other written translation varieties, like scientific or literary translation, for example. This has not been the research intention of the study.

Additionally, one should be very careful because correlation and regression tools only provided acceptable values in the very particular case of a 'reduced modified corpus scenario', namely one of 4 films, where the 'easiest film' (*The Hours*) had been removed. However, the fact that the statistical values obtained, even with those limitations, were slightly higher than in the case of 'real corpus scenario' (both for the correlation factor and the R^2 coefficient) is notorious, and somehow might indicate that the hypothesis might make sense when formulated in the case of "real" written texts. As a consequence, these results

are only to be considered as ones for a research exercise which was carried out with available data, and with the only intention to illustrate a methodology of analysis which could also be applied to data obtained from a real' written texts corpus.

As a final remark, this study has tried to prove (with available data) that a literal approach to translation is still reasonable and possible, at least in instances where no specific problems (or constraints) are present. Although data has been extracted from a limited corpus, and it has been manipulated in accordance with specific research intentions, results are obtained by following a rigorous quantitative and statistical methodology. It is hoped that this effort may encourage other researchers to further explore this particular case of real translation practice, translation without constraints, which seems to have been, more often than not, ignored.

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