

**Analysis of the Translation Problems and Techniques of the English-Spanish
Translation of Four Chapters of the Book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes**

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DEDICATION

To God, everything I do is for Him.

To my father, who now is in Heaven.

To my mother, sister, and brother, who are my motivation.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative descriptive research analyzes the translation problems and the techniques used to solve them in the process of translating, from English into Spanish, four chapters of the Catholic book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes, belonging to the personal growth and spirituality genres and the instructional text typology. These types of studies constitute a communicative tool for foreign language learners and pre-service teachers since translation serves as a bridge between languages and cultures, combining theoretical bases with professional practices. Also, translation works are helpful for the development of language skills, awareness of the differences between languages and cultures, and the recognition of the communicative situation of texts.

The translation was carried out from a functional perspective. It started with the identification of the genre and text typology of the source text (ST) to then perform a textual analysis based on Nord's model (2005) to determine the Skopos (i.e., the purpose, function or aims of the text). Finally, the problems encountered and the techniques applied during the process were recorded and categorized following Nord's (2005) translation problems classification (pragmatic, convention-related, linguistic, and text-specific problems) and Molina and Hurtado's (2001) eighteen revised translation techniques.

Problems of all four categories were found, and eight different translation techniques were applied to solve them (established equivalent, reduction, amplification, adaptation, modulation, literal translation, borrowing, and linguistic amplification). The results suggest a link between text genre/text typology and the type of translation problems encountered, as well as between translation problems and the techniques applied to solve them. Also, the sociocultural context of the ST and TT plays a fundamental role in the translator's decision-making process when facing such problems.

Keywords: translation, textual analysis, Skopos theory, translation problems, translation techniques, English-Spanish translation, personal growth and spirituality, instructional text.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem

The translation of the book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes emerges from a request by a group of Hispanic Catholics residing in California, USA, who desire to have access to the book contents in their mother tongue, Spanish. This book belongs to the personal growth and spirituality genres and talks about the virtue of humility. This virtue is highly significant and necessary for the moral life of Catholics since it is considered the foundation for other Catholic virtues such as faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. These virtues are required for being a coherent Christian because they allow the person not only to perform good acts but to give the best of himself (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1803).

Although the whole book will be translated, the first four chapters of the book were chosen due to three reasons: 1) the length of pages allowed in the *Reglamento para la elaboración y presentación de trabajos de grado* (guidelines to write dissertations for the bachelor's degree in foreign languages at the Universidad del Valle); 2) The time allotted for finishing the dissertation; and 3) the relevance of these first four chapters, which contains the foundations of the book.

Throughout the translation of these chapters, and that of any text, pragmatic, conventional-related, linguistic, and text-specific problems emerge. To solve them, the translator must analyze each and apply appropriate translation techniques. These solutions must be made considering different factors such as the purpose of the translation, the genre and typology of the text, and the textual analysis carried out in advance. In this vein, the research questions and objectives that will guide this study are presented below.

1.2 Research questions

Main Research question:

- What are the translation problems and the techniques used to solve them in the translation of the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* from English into Spanish?

Specific research questions:

- What are the problems that arise when translating the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* from English into Spanish?
- What are the most suitable translation techniques to solve those translation problems?

Based on these questions, the objectives of this study are the following:

Main objective:

- To analyze the translation problems and the translation techniques used to solve them during the translation of four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* from English into Spanish.

Specific objectives:

- To identify the genre and text typology of the book *How to Be Somebody*.
- To identify the purpose of the translation in light of Nord's definition of Skopos theory.
- To classify the translation problems found in the process based on Nord's classification.
- To apply Molina and Hurtado's translation techniques to solve the translation problems.

1.3 Significance of the study

Studies on translation are meaningful in language teaching and learning because of three reasons. On the one hand, translation is recognized as a central concern of applied linguistics since it serves as a bridge between languages and cultures, combining theoretical bases with professional practices (Akyay & Coskun, 2022). Similarly, Newmark (1991) affirms that:

In the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers (p.62).

On the other hand, these translation studies promote the development of language skills and knowledge of the language (Akyay & Coskun, 2022). When foreign language learners or pre-service teachers translate, they acquire more awareness of the differences between the source language (SL) and target language (TL). With translation problems, for example, they recognize the linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural aspects that languages comprise and the implications of these differences in the translation decisions.

Lastly, translating requires an understanding of the source text (ST) and target text (TT), that is, their communicative situation, genre, and typology to achieve an appropriate result. Therefore, foreign language learners or pre-service teachers have the opportunity to perform textual analysis with a contextualized communicative purpose. Thus, they can recognize that translating is more than transferring meaning into another language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review discusses previous research on translation problems and techniques in the English-Spanish direction. Theories, methodologies, patterns, and gaps will be identified to provide an overview of how other works have approached these objects of study. For a more meaningful and organized analysis, this review will be divided into three sections: 1) studies on translation problems/difficulties, 2) studies on translation techniques, and 3) studies on translation problems and techniques.

2.1 Studies on Translation Problems/Difficulties

Five studies are reviewed here that addressed translation problems/difficulties in English-Spanish translations, using different taxonomies. Nord's (2005) classification of problems was used in Marco's work (2015) in the translation of a children's book (non-specialized), while Viñez's (2014) classification of difficulties was used in Pozo's (2018) the rendering of an academic article (semi-specialized), and Guerrero (2020) followed Cao's (2007) classification of translation difficulties for legal documents in the translation of a legal opinion (specialized). Conversely, Recasens (2021) and Jimenez (2017) used their own classification of translation problems in the rendering of fragments of personal essays (non-specialized) and patient leaflets (semi-specialized), respectively. All these studies followed a qualitative methodology, so most authors organized the results by their specific classification and provided some examples to illustrate the problem/difficulty. Also, this variety of genres gave different results, so they will be presented separately below.

First of all, following Nord's (2005) classification, Marco (2015) found three types of translation problems in a fragment of the children's book *Permanent Rose*: 1) cultural problems, such as cultural references due to the difference between the source culture (SC), the United Kingdom, and the Target culture (TC), Spain; 2) linguistic problems, such as interjections and articulated sounds; and 3) extraordinary problems, i.e., wordplays and metaphors. According to the author, no pragmatic problems were found.

On the other hand, Recasens (2021) translated fragments of personal essays from *Tonight I'm Someone Else* by Chelsea Hodson and classified the translation problems encountered into three categories: 1) localization and cultural adaptation, such as units of measurement and proper nouns; 2) the use of italics and quotation marks, both in dialogue and around proper nouns and foreign words; and 3) the translation of the gerund and literary figures, i.e., polysyndeton, personification, repetition, paradox, metaphor, and rhetorical question. This classification was not based on that of another author but on the one proposed by herself, what can be a disadvantage when comparing with other results, due to lack of standardization.

Similarly to the previous study, Jimenez (2017) analyzed the translation of patient leaflets from the United Kingdom, grouping the problems together by using his own classification, which comprised 15 different categories: 1) medical terminology; 2) legal terminology; 3) translation of grammatical gender; 4) cultural problems such as references to institutions, health professionals; 5) procedures with untranslatable or nonexistent equivalents; 6) Spanish variety; 7) use of initialisms; 8) idiomatic expressions and metaphors; 9) verb tense; 10) register; 11) use of the second person; 12) style; 13) anglicisms; 14) inappropriate use of pronouns, articles, demonstrative and possessive adjectives; and 15) orthographic and grammatical problems. This classification differs from the others in that it is more granular, breaking down translation problems into very specific categories, making it more challenging to compare across different studies with the same language combination and direction.

For her part, Pozo (2011) translated the academic article *Breaking through Walls: A Look at the Life of Leif Hovelsen* and organized the results in terms of “translation difficulties” rather than translation problems, following Viñez's (2014) classification of translation difficulties. She found 1) cultural difficulties, such as historical concepts, names of institutions, political positions, and political and geopolitical terms; 2) grammatical difficulties, related to verbal tenses and adjectives; 3) linguistic difficulties, especially idiomatic expressions; 4) syntactic difficulties, such as the use of the pronominal subject, which is mandatory in English, and sentence length, which is shorter in English; 5) lexical-semantic difficulties, i.e.,

anthroponyms, terms and concepts without equivalents in the TT, names of literary, musical, cinematographic works; 6) false friends; and 7) format and punctuation difficulties.

Finally, Guerrero (2020) translated the Opinion of the State of New York into Spanish and followed Cao's (2007) classification of translation difficulties in legal documents. She encountered 1) source text difficulties, 2) legal system difficulties, 3) linguistic difficulties, 4) cultural difficulties, 5) terminological problems due to the difference in levels of equivalence between legal concepts in the source and target legal systems, and 6) stylistic problems, i.e., problems with established formulas, syntactic complexities, and structural features.

On the one hand, all these studies utilized different problems classifications, both recognized classifications from different theorists and the authors' own classifications, which can make it challenging to compare results across the studies. In spite of this, the following conclusions were reached: linguistic and cultural problems were present in all the text genres; however, cultural problems were more prominent in non-specialized texts. On the contrary, terminological and lexical problems were mainly found in semi-specialized and specialized texts, what may indicate that the genre of a text and its degree of specialization have an influence on the types of problems found during its translation.

On the other hand, such studies only focus on translation problems and do not provide details on the translation techniques or strategies used to solve those problems. Such an approach would have helped the readers and other translators to understand the process carried out, as well as to verify whether or not there was an interrelation between genre, translation problem/difficulty, and translation technique/strategy.

2.2 Studies on Translation Techniques

Four studies reviewed here addressed translation techniques in English-Spanish translations. Unlike the works on translation problems reported above, these studies used a mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative analysis) in light of Hurtado's (2001) classification. The steps followed in these studies were similar: first, the authors selected a text or sections of a text depending on the length; then, they identified the techniques used to translate it; finally,

the techniques were classified and analyzed.

Again, the results differed due to the variety of genres of the translated texts: a religious text (non-specialized) in Burga (2022), a civil registry documents (specialized) in Torres (2020), a mining sustainability report (specialized) in Castillo (2019), and a group of Christian hymns (non-specialized) in Villalobos (2018). The results will be presented separately below.

First, Burga (2022) found 11 techniques in the translation of 56 verses of a religious text named Moroni. The most frequent/common technique was literal translation (65%); however, the author decided to take it as a characteristic of the translation, so he focused on the other techniques and omitted it. Thus, the results were the following: linguistic amplification (29%), modulation (21%), transposition (10%), compensation (9%), linguistic compression (7%), borrowing (5%), established equivalent (5%), particularization (4%), elision (4%), calque (4%) and amplification (2%). In conclusion, the most relevant techniques were linguistic amplification, modulation, and transposition, which allowed the translator to convey the contextual and dogmatic character of the text analyzed.

In her study, Torres (2020) identified 6 techniques in the translation of civil registry documents. The two most frequent techniques were literal translation (70%) and borrowing (10%). Also, adaptation (8%), elision (6%), calque (5%), and linguistic amplification (1%) were used during the translation process. These techniques are evidence of the attempt to preserve the fidelity of the ST in this type of document.

Then, Castillo (2019) found 5 techniques in the translation of a mining sustainability report. These translation techniques were: transposition (44%), linguistic amplification (32%), literal translation (12%), borrowing (8%), and modulation (4%). The author concluded that the predominance of the transposition technique is because the formal and technical document analyzed provides information on the operation of a company in the mining industry. Therefore, the transposition technique achieves a more precise and coherent translation in the TL by changing the grammatical category.

Finally, Villalobos (2018) found 10 techniques for translating 30 Christian hymns. The results were the following: modulation (55%), compensation (13%), discursive creation (11%),

linguistic compression (5%), particularization (5%), elision (4%), literal translation (2%), linguistic amplification (2%), established equivalent (2%), and generalization (1%). The author concludes that the techniques applied depended on the intention of the translation, which was to convey the same message of the hymns in Spanish and to allow people to sing them naturally.

Overall, the most repeated techniques were linguistic amplification (present in 4/4), literal translation (4/4), modulation (3/4), borrowing (3/4), and elision (3/4). However, the percentages varied in each translation depending on the genre of the text. For instance, the linguistic amplification technique was significantly used in the mining sustainability report (32%) and in the religious text (29%) because of the need for detail that they required. However, it was used sparingly in the Christian hymns (2%) and the civil registry documents (1%) due to the purpose of these texts which was respectively poetically praising God, and recording civil status information. Therefore, the text genre is probably a determining variable in the use of translation techniques.

Although the use of quantitative data provides a more accurate view of the most frequently used translation techniques, it can lead to confusion between the terms “translation technique” and “translation method” since they are not applied based on a specific application criterion (such as translation problems). That is why, the analysis of both translation problems and techniques can result in clearer delimitations in the way the techniques are applied and allow for enriching correlations.

2.3 Studies on both Translation Problems and Techniques

Four studies reviewed here addressed both translation problems and techniques. Nord’s (2005) problems classification was used in Arco (2019), Mora (2014), and Cuéllar and Eraso (2017) in the translation of a scientific article (specialized), a novel (non-specialized), and two chapters of an academic book (semi-specialized), respectively. Conversely, Hurtado’s (2001) problems classification was used in Moreno’s work (2018) in the translation of a chapter from a viticulture book (specialized). All the studies followed Hurtado’s (2001) techniques classification and used a qualitative methodology comprising a descriptive analysis of one or

more excerpts of the ST and TT. These text excerpts served as examples for the subcategories of each type of translation problem, illustrating both the problem detected and the technique applied to solve it. The results will be presented separately below.

To begin, Arcos (2019) reported that most of the translation problems encountered in his rendering of the scientific article *Contemporary Developmental Theory and Adolescence-Developmental Systems and Applied Developmental Science* belonged to the linguistic category, including syntactic problems, specialized lexicon, and polysemic terms. The techniques applied to solve these problems were mainly linguistic amplification, established equivalent, transposition, and particularization. Pragmatic problems, such as pronouns and presuppositions problems, were solved with the techniques of literal translation, modulation, and linguistic compression. Cultural problems, such as connotation and linguistic variation, were solved with the techniques of amplification and description. Finally, extralinguistic problems, specifically errors in the ST, were solved with the compensation technique.

Then, Mora (2014) found problems of all types in the translation of the novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. Linguistic problems were the most frequently encountered in the text, amongst which were idioms. The category of pragmatic problems also presented many cases, especially in the subcategory of presuppositions. In terms of cultural problems, expressions, and taboo content were often found. Less frequently, extraordinary problems were encountered at the level of literary figures and neologisms. As for the translation techniques, the most commonly used was modulation, especially for linguistic and extraordinary problems. Also, the literal translation technique was frequently used.

For his part, Moreno (2018) translated a chapter of the book *Wine Storage and Service*. In this case, the author followed Hurtado's problems classification and grouped them together into extralinguistic and linguistic problems. As for the extralinguistic problems encountered, subject mastery and cultural problems were solved with adaptation, transposition, particularization, and amplification techniques. Linguistic problems, such as specialized terms, morphosyntax, and style were solved with the techniques of established equivalent, literal translation, particularization, calque, transposition, amplification, and linguistic compression.

Finally, Cuéllar and Eraso (2017) translated two chapters of the academic book *Teaching and Learning Second Language Listening, Metacognition in Action*. In the process, the authors found pragmatic problems such as pronouns, exemplification, and suprasegmental elements, which were solved with the techniques of elision, adaptation, amplification, and literal translation. Cultural problems, i.e., cultural and behavioral conventions, and style figures were addressed with borrowing, established equivalent, and adaptation techniques. Linguistic problems such as specialized lexicon and cohesion and coherence were solved with the techniques of established equivalent, transposition, and literal translation.

In sum, studies that analyze both translation problems and techniques allow us to understand more clearly the decisions made by the translator of a specific text, as both the problematic excerpt and the most appropriate technique applied are presented. These works do not intend to provide quantitative results perhaps due to one of their purposes: To approach and illustrate a real translation process, which implies identifying problems and delivering solutions.

Altogether, the works reported in this literature review seem to indicate that genre is a factor having a significant influence on the types of problems that can be found during the translation of a text, and on the translation techniques. For example, specialized genres pose problems mainly related to terminology, which is uncommon in non-specialized genres. Also, regarding the latter, cultural problems are the most common ones, particularly because of the distance between the source audience (SA) and the target audience (TA).

Based on those trends, analyzing the translation problems of four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* would be meaningful for expanding scholarly knowledge on translation for the following reasons: 1) this type of analysis appears not to have been carried out before about a text belonging to the personal growth and spirituality genre, and 2) the fact that the TA is also in contact with the SA (due to its shared geographic location) would provide interesting results. Additionally, analyzing only one aspect (either translation problems or translation techniques) limits the understanding of the decisions made by the translator to solve the problems/difficulties.

For this reason, the present study will address both aspects to have a more comprehensive view of the translation process involving this type of text.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Throughout history, translation has been used as a tool for communication between languages, cultures, and even within the same language (intralingual translation, e.g., when rewording or paraphrasing an idea, or rewriting it in a different dialect of the same language). Its long trajectory has given rise to different perspectives in the field. For this reason, it is necessary to present the most relevant translation theories, approaches, and concepts in order to establish the ones guiding the present work.

3.1 Definitions of translation

According to Munday (2016), there are three perspectives from which translation can be defined: 1) as the general subject field or the phenomenon that is studied in academia or at a professional level; 2) as the product of translation, i.e. the resulting translated text; and 3) as the process of producing a translation (p.8). Nonetheless, Hurtado (2001) proposes a broader classification stating four conceptions of translation depending on the aspect that theorists focus on. These conceptions are presented below, followed by her integrative definition of translation.

3.1.1 Translation as an activity between languages

This definition only considers the linguistic aspect of translation since it affirms that translation is about expressing a reality from language A to language B (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p.4). Thus, translation from this perspective is conceived as a transfer of linguistic elements at the language level (*langue*) rather than at the speech level (*parole*). An example of this is translating an article word-for-word or following a literal translation.

3.1.2 Translation as a textual activity

In contrast to the previous definition, translation as a textual activity is considered to be a transfer of meaning. The message that is given through the text is the object of translation, not the linguistic elements (Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1984). Therefore, not only should the translation process be carried out at the language level (*langue*) but also at the meaning level,

as the semantic and pragmatic elements of a text must be taken into account in order to convey its sense in the other language. An instance of this conception is translating a poem maintaining the characteristics of this text typology, i.e. preserving the rhythm and imagery of the poem.

3.1.3 Translation as an act of communication

This definition goes beyond the borders of the ST and pays special attention to the sociocultural context that surrounds it. Translation is presented “as a communicative process which takes place within a social context” (Hatim & Mason, 1993, p.3). In this manner, special importance is given to the communicative situation, its reception, and its purpose, among other aspects. Continuing with the example of a poem, this translation perspective would take into consideration to whom the ST was addressed and their context (e.g. American children in the 80’s), to whom the TT will be targeted (e.g. Colombian children in 2024), and its purpose (e.g. to practice phonological combinations).

3.1.4 Translation as a process

This definition can be approached in two ways: 1) translation as a process of comparing languages, and 2) translation as a process of understanding and expressing. The former view is very limited because it presents translation as the process of decoding linguistic units and ignoring the extralinguistic elements of the text. Furthermore, it does not take into consideration the complexity of the mental processes that translation requires.

The latter view defines translation as an operation that determines the meaning of the linguistic signs according to the meaning that the sender originally wanted to convey in the SL message in order to restore it through the linguistic signs of the TL integratively (Delisle, 1984).

3.1.5 An integrative definition of translation

Based on the variety of definitions presented above, Hurtado (2001) establishes an integrative one, which contains three essential features that any definition of translation should include: the act of communication, textual operation, and cognitive activity.

First, translation is an act of communication because it is carried out to communicate to the TA a text that is not in its language. Hence, communicative intentions must prevail when translating a text rather than just its linguistic features to meet the TA's needs.

Second, translation is a textual operation because translators translate texts, not isolated units. This means that cohesion, coherence, and other textual elements must be taken into account in the translation process to ensure the appropriateness of the TT in terms of form, style, and content.

Finally, translation is a cognitive activity because it is carried out by a person (the translator), who performs complex mental processes (e.g., information processing, decision-making, problem-solving, etc.) and which involves the two previous features. The translator is the one who not only has to understand and interpret the communicative needs and purposes of the translation but also the text and all its elements. All of this is necessary to carry out a suitable translation.

In the light of these three essential features, Hurtado (2001) proposes the following definition of translation: “[La traducción es] un proceso interpretativo comunicativo consistente en la reformulación de un texto con los medios de otra lengua que se desarrolla en un contexto social y con una finalidad determinada” (p.41). This definition is the one that will guide the present work since it regards communication as the goal, the text as the material to work with, and the translator as the agent who interprets and carries out the translation process.

3.2 Classification of theoretical approaches to translation

In the same way, Hurtado (2001) formulates an integrative definition of translation, she also proposes a classification of theoretical approaches to translation, with the understanding that their boundaries are not rigidly defined and may even overlap. In other words, in this classification, the approaches do not exclude one another but focus on different elements around which translation theories are developed. The approaches are divided into five categories: 1) linguistic approaches, 2) textual approaches, 3) cognitive approaches, 4) philosophical and hermeneutic approaches, and 5) communicative and sociocultural approaches.

3.2.1 Linguistic approaches

These approaches focus on the description and comparison of linguistic elements in translation. Some of these approaches include comparative linguistics, comparative stylistics, grammatical comparisons between languages, translation levels, semantic approaches, and semiotic approaches, among others.

3.2.2 Textual approaches

Textual approaches focus on text comparison instead of language comparison, thus being influenced by text linguistics and discourse analysis. They consider textual typologies, superstructure, macrostructure, microstructure, coherence and cohesion, intertextuality, etc.

3.2.3 Cognitive approaches

Studies under these approaches concentrate on the analysis of the translator's mental processes and his/her translation skills. This involves a focus on the translator's processes of problem-solving and decision-making. Some of the theories developed under these approaches are the interpretative model, psycholinguistics and artificial intelligence, the psycholinguistics model, and the application of cognitive psychology, among others.

3.2.4 Philosophical and hermeneutic approaches

These approaches address translation from different philosophical perspectives to analyze it or to study philosophical aspects related to translation. However, some of these studies are skeptical about the use of the scientific method in translation, so they prefer to analyze topics such as the nature of translation, its origins, its relation with rhetoric and philosophy, etc. Theories stemming from these approaches are biblical hermeneutics, philosophy and translation, speculative approaches, and hermeneutic approaches, among others.

3.2.5 Communicative and sociocultural approaches

Finally, these approaches focus on the communicative function of translation by considering the context, the relevance of the cultural elements, and the reception of the translation.

On the one hand, there are communicative approaches that analyze the extratextual elements of the ST such as situational parameters, context dimensions, and the communicative-functional approach. On the other hand, there are sociocultural approaches that analyze the cultural and temporal differences that influence translation. Among these, are biblical traductology, the application of sociolinguistics, the Manipulation School, and the functionalist approach.

Bearing in mind that the translation of the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes from English into Spanish is addressed to a group of Catholic Hispanics residing in California, USA, it is important to highlight that the translation's context of reception is the same as that of the intended SA (in terms of country) and the same as that of the author (in terms of state). This implies that the SA and the TA share some characteristics, which in turn affect the choices made throughout the translation process. Consequently, a functionalist approach was selected as the best approach for the present study, specifically, the Skopos theory (Reiss and Vermeer, [1984] 2013) and Nord's (2005) text analysis.

3.3 Functionalist approach: The Skopos theory

As mentioned above, there is more than one way of translating a text, which is dependent on what the translator wants to achieve with the translation, based on the analysis of some elements. According to the functionalist approach proposed by Reiss and Vermeer ([1984] 2013), a translation is determined by a Skopos, which means "purpose", "function" or "aims". This Skopos is, in turn, determined by the TA. In other words, the functionalist approach suggests that translators should not be rigidly bound to the ST or attempt to replicate it exactly in the TL. Instead, they should focus on producing a translation that effectively achieves its purpose by considering the expectations of the TA, its context, and its cultural aspects. In fact, "there is no such thing as 'the' translation of a text; the results of the translation process will vary according to their skopoi" (Reiss & Vermeer, [1984] 2013, pp. 91).

As can be deduced, this theory acknowledges the fact that translations may differ from the ST in terms of structure, content, or even language choices. The functionalist approach emphasizes the dynamic and situational nature of translation, where the translator's role is to

determine the most appropriate strategies and techniques to achieve the Skopos. In this way, this approach provides a framework for the translator to make decisions that optimize the effectiveness of the TT in its specific communicative situation.

3.4 Translation methods

In addition to translation approaches, different translation methods are also used to guide the decisions in the translation process. According to Hurtado (2001), a translation method is a global option chosen by the translator depending on their objective or purpose, which affects the whole text. Unlike a translation strategy, which is a way to solve a translation problem that emerges as an individual problem, a translation method is supra-individual and conscious and is determined by a set of principles.

In this order of ideas, Hurtado (2001) proposes four translation methods depending on the intention of the translator: 1) the *literal method*, which aims to preserve the same linguistic codification; 2) the *free method*, in which the TT is adapted to the TA by modifying the semiotic and communicative categories; 3) the *philological method*, which intends to produce a more academic translation by focusing on the ST as an object of study; and 4) the *interpretative-communicative method*, in which the function of the ST is preserved. This latter method is the most consistent with the functionalist approach; therefore, it was selected for the present work.

3.5 Definitions of equivalence

In translation theory, one of the most important and commonplace terms is that of *equivalence*, which refers to the relationship between the ST and the TT. The first theorist who proposed this term was Nida (1964), of which he presented two types: 1) *formal equivalence* and 2) *dynamic equivalence*. On the one hand, formal equivalence aims for a translation to stay as close as possible to the ST in terms of form and content, that is, keeping the ST structure, lexis, and content of the message itself. To achieve this, literal translation is frequently utilized, which implies a loss of naturalness due to the extensive use of footnotes. On the other hand, dynamic equivalence, also called functional equivalence, seeks to replicate the effect that the ST has on

the SA but on the TA (Nida, 1964). In contrast to formal equivalence, which tries to preserve form and content, dynamic equivalence allows making adjustments at different levels to reach TT naturalness for the TA.

A similar way to refer to dynamic equivalence is the definition proposed by Reiss and Vermeer ([1984] 2013). They state that “equivalence is the relationship between a TT and a ST which (can) achieve the same communicative function at the same level in the two cultures involved” (p. 127). In other words, equivalence does not allude strictly to the sameness in content, form, style, etc., but to the sameness in function.

Nevertheless, from a functionalist perspective, the function of the ST and that of the TT are not always the same. For this reason, Reiss and Vermeer ([1984] 2013) suggest the term “adequacy” to refer to the “relationship between a ST and a TT, where consistent attention is paid to the purpose (Skopos) of the translation process” (p. 127). So the term “equivalence” for them is a type of adequacy in which the function in the ST and the TT is the same.

Although both functional equivalence and dynamic equivalence recognize the importance of the function of the TT, this can open the possibility of distorting the ST author’s intention and disregarding the moral principle of loyalty. In consequence, Nord (2005) proposes the concept of “functionality plus loyalty”, contemplating that “the translator is committed bilaterally to the ST as well as to the TT situation and is responsible for both the ST sender and the TT receiver” (p.32). In that order of ideas, translators can focus on some elements of the TT based on the Skopos, but they also have to be loyal to the ST authors by specifying which aspects are included and which ones are not. These considerations have to be made through a ST analysis to guide the decisions purposefully and consciously.

3.6 Translation-oriented text analysis

To produce a translation of the book *How to Be Somebody* from English into Spanish that is both functional and loyal, Nord’s (2005) model of text analysis was followed. This model analyzes two types of factors: 1) extratextual and 2) intratextual. The definitions of these factors are explained below for a better understanding.

3.6.1 Extratextual factors

These factors comprise the communicative situation of the ST and the characteristics of the communicative background of the ST author and the ST audience. According to Nord (2005), these factors can be analyzed before reading the ST because they do not depend on the text by itself but on the context where it was developed. In total, there are eight extratextual factors that can be presented in the form of questions:

- Who is the sender?
- What is the sender's intention?
- Who is the text targeted at?
- By which means or channel is the text communicated?
- Where (place) was the text produced? Where is it received?
- When (time) was the text produced? and, when is it received?
- What is the motive for communication?
- What is the communicative function of the ST?

3.6.2 Intratextual factors

Factors of this type refer to the internal components of the ST itself, i.e. its message, structure, layout, and the different elements that it is constituted of. The analysis of the intratextual factors is usually carried out after the extratextual analysis because the former is influenced by the latter (Nord, 2005). Overall, they can be classified into eight factors in the form of a question as well:

- What is the subject matter?
- What is the information or content presented in the text?
- What are the knowledge presuppositions made by the author?
- What is the composition or construction of the text?
- What are the non-linguistics or paralinguistics elements present in the text?
- What are the lexical characteristics of the text?
- What are the syntactic characteristics of the text?
- What are the suprasegmental features of intonation and prosody in the text?

3.7 Types of translation

After analyzing the ST, the translator has a deeper knowledge of its relation with the TT, their contexts, audiences, etc. Based on this analysis, the type of translation to be produced is determined and will then guide the decisions made by the translator along the translation process. Nord (2005) proposes two types of translation: *documentary* and *instrumental*.

On the one hand, *documentary translation* serves “as a document of a SC communication between the author and the ST recipient” (Nord 2005, p.80). It reproduces the whole ST or certain aspects of it as long as the function of the text is achieved. In other words, this type of translation does not make great changes or adaptations for the TC, making the latter aware that the TT is a translation.

On the other hand, *instrumental translation* “serves as an independent message-transmitting instrument in a new communicative action in the TC” (Nord, 2005, p.81). It can have the same or similar ST function but many aspects are adapted to the TC. This means that the TA is not aware that the TT is a translation.

Considering that the translation of the book *How to Be Somebody* is targeted at a TA residing in the same country and state, that is, people who are in touch with the SC, a documentary translation would be more appropriate. That is to say, cultural elements or references will be preserved as long as the function is preserved.

3.8 Translation problems

Regardless of the type of translation chosen, translation problems always arise. But first, it is important to differentiate them from translation difficulties. According to Nord (2005), translation problems have an objective nature, because they are common for all translators during the translation process regardless of their competency level or the technical conditions of their work. On the contrary, translation difficulties have a subjective nature, they are related to the translator’s competence and the technical conditions of his or her work. In other words, translation problems are common for all translators regardless of their experience or competence, while translation difficulties are issues experienced by a specific translator.

In this study, we will only focus on translation problems, following Nord's (2005) problems classification: pragmatic, conventional-related, linguistic, and text-specific.

3.8.1 Pragmatic problems

They refer to the challenges that arise due to differences in the transfer situation of the ST and TT audience, media, motives, and functions. They are extralinguistic problems and depend on the differences between the SL context and the TL context and on how the text is translated from one to the other (Nord, 2005). Thus, pragmatic problems are related to the functional and communicative aspects of the text and the knowledge shared by the interlocutors. Nord (2005) affirms that this type of problem can be identified using the analysis of extratextual factors proposed in her model. For example, deixis such as “now”, “tomorrow”, “here”, “there”, “this”, “that”, etc., are a problem since requiring a reference that probably changes when translating. Other pragmatic problems are: contact with the receiver, exemplification, presuppositions, and suprasegmental elements.

3.8.2 Convention-related problems

These problems emerge from the difference between the SC and the TC in terms of cultural habits, norms, and conventions. They can be verbal or non-verbal and may not be shared by the TA of the TT (Nord, 2005). For instance, references to well-known movies in a country may be unfamiliar in another place. Other conventional-related problems are: connotations, cultural conventions of behavior, linguistic variation, lexicon specific to the period, and style figures belong to this category.

3.8.3 Linguistic problems

They arise because of the difference between the SL linguistic system and that of the TL, especially in terminology and syntax. Therefore, the translator has to make adjustments at the lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels to achieve the communicative function of the TT without affecting translation loyalty (Nord, 2005). For example, sentences tend to be shorter in English than in Spanish, what requires attention when translating between these languages to achieve

naturalness. Other linguistic problems are: specialized terminology, speech modifiers, coherence, and cohesion.

3.8.4 Text-specific problems

These translation problems occur in a particular text as special cases; they cannot be classified as pragmatic, convection-related, or linguistic problems (Nord, 2005). For instance, when the TT author misspells some words, or writes unclear ideas. Other text-specific problems include thematic progression, writing issues, cohesion, textual genre conventions, and style.

3.9 Translation techniques

To solve the different types of problems presented above, it is necessary to apply certain translation techniques. However, the term “translation techniques” may be confused with that of “translation strategies”, so distinguishing them becomes essential for establishing the scope of this work. Hurtado (2001) proposes the following differentiation of the terms:

A translation technique is the specific application that can be observed in the product and affects the minor zones of the text. For example, in the translation of a cartoon, a translator may, on occasions, resort to the technique of adapting a cultural referent [...]. A strategy is of an individual and procedural nature and consists of mechanisms used by the translator to solve problems encountered during the translation process, depending on specific needs (pp. 249-250).

This means that translation techniques are specific procedures affecting particular text units while translation strategies are broader ones that affect the text as a whole. Despite both being very relevant in the translation process, the present work will only focus on techniques, given the fact that they are concrete applications that are visible in the resulting translation and can be suggested as the solution to the translation problems that may arise. For that purpose, Molina and Hurtado's (2001) eighteen revised translation techniques will be considered, as shown below.

- **Adaptation:** Replacing a ST cultural element with an equivalent cultural element from the TC. For example, translate “baseball” as “fútbol” from English into Spanish.
- **Amplification:** Expanding the content or expression in the TL to clarify or explain the meaning of the ST. Information, explicative paraphrasing, or footnotes are types of amplification.
- **Borrowing:** Adopting a word or phrase from the SL directly into the TT. E.g., using “lobby” in Spanish.
- **Calque:** Borrowing a word or phrase from the SL but translating it literally in the TL. It can be lexical or structural, e.g. translating “Normal School” as “escuela normal”.
- **Compensation:** Making up for any loss or untranslatability in the TL by adding an element of information or stylistic effect in another place of the TT. For instance, to translate “Boy, it was raining cats and dogs!” into Spanish as “¡Uf, estaba lloviendo a cántaros!”.
- **Description:** Describing a term instead of the term to convey the same meaning as the ST. E.g., instead of translating “Panettone”, include “the traditional Italian cake eaten on New Year’s Eve”.
- **Discursive Creation:** Creating a temporary equivalent in the TT that is totally unpredictable out of context. For instance, the translation of the movie “Home Alone” is translated into Spanish as “Mi Pobre Angelito”.
- **Established Equivalent:** Using an existing term or expression that is recognized as equivalent in the TL. E.g., the expression “it’s raining cats and dogs” is the established equivalent of “está lloviendo a cántaros” in Spanish.
- **Generalization:** Using a more general term or expression in the TL to encompass various specific instances. For instance, translating “he drives a Mercedes” as “él conduce un carro”.
- **Linguistic Amplification:** Adding linguistic elements to the translation to better convey the intended meaning. E.g., translating “now way” as “de ninguna manera”.

- **Linguistic Compression:** Condensing the linguistic elements in the TL to convey the same meaning more concisely. For example, “Yes, so what?”, as “¿Y?”
- **Literal Translation:** Translating the ST word-for-word, maintaining the exact structure and form. E.g., “she is eating” as “ella está comiendo”.
- **Modulation:** Changing the perspective, angle, or emphasis of the ST in the TL while maintaining the meaning. It can be lexical or structural. For instance, “I’m pregnant”, as “estoy esperando un bebé”.
- **Particularization:** Providing a more specific or concise term in the TL. E.g., “I have a pet” as “tengo un perro”.
- **Reduction:** Suppressing a ST information item in the TT. In other studies, it is called elision or omission.
- **Substitution:** Replacing a linguistic element with a paralinguistic element or vice versa to convey the same meaning. E.g., “they put their hands on their hearts”, as “ellos agradecieron”.
- **Transposition:** Changing the grammatical category or syntactic structure of a word or phrase while maintaining its meaning. For instance, “He will soon be back” as “No demora en venir”.
- **Variation:** Using different words, expressions, or structures in the TL to be more appropriate for the TA. For example, changing dialectal indicators for a character in a novel.

METHODOLOGY

In order to analyze both the translation problems encountered during the English into Spanish translation of the first four chapters of *How to Be Somebody*, this study followed a qualitative descriptive methodology. The methodology consisted of six stages: 1) Reading the ST twice, 2) Determining the ST genre and text typology, 3) Performing the textual analyses of the ST and the TT, 4) Producing the first and second translation drafts in the Smartcat platform, 5) Classifying the encountered translation problems and the techniques applied to solve them, and 6) Analyzing and describing the most relevant translation problems and the techniques applied. Also, validity, reliability, and ethical considerations were included to ensure the overall quality and trustworthiness of this work.

4.1 Procedure and analysis

The six stages followed during this work are presented in more detail below.

1) The book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes was read twice in its entirety for a better understanding and to carry out the subsequent analyses. The proper development of this stage was essential for the next ones, since without a clear comprehension of the text, their outcomes would not have been reliable.

2) The ST was classified based on Hatim and Mason's (1993) genre and text typology definitions. This allowed the next stage to be developed more optimally given that genre and textual typology are greatly related to the function of a text.

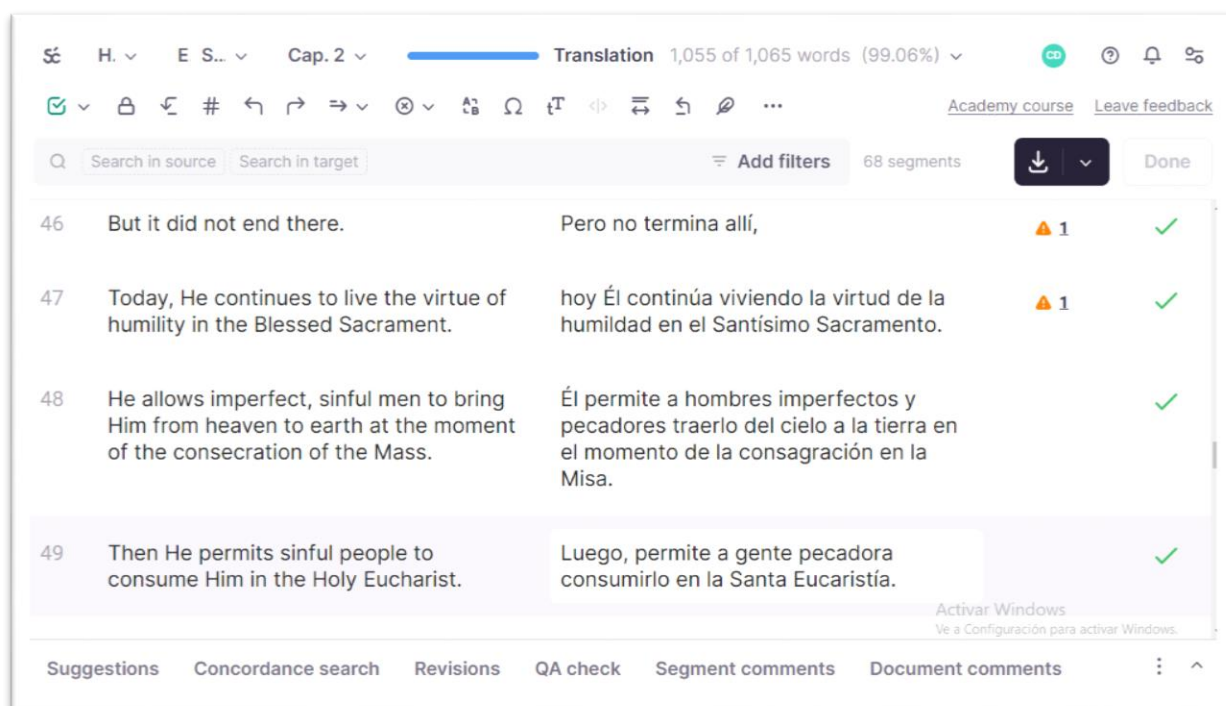
3) Following Nord's (2005) text analysis, the intratextual and extratextual factors of the ST and TT were analyzed to determine its Skopos. This stage is the foundation for the whole translation process because it helps the translator to a) determine the purpose of the translation, and b) establish the translation method, strategy, and techniques he/she should use to fulfill that purpose.

4) The ST was uploaded to the web-based CAT tool Smartcat. This tool facilitated translation since it segmented the ST into sentences by default, allowing a more orderly and manageable translation. Neither machine nor AI-powered translation options offered by the

tool were used so as to avoid altering the results. Once the first draft was revised by the dissertation supervisor, the second draft was produced based on her corrections and recommendations.

Figure 1

Web-based CAT tool Smartcat



5) The translation problems were identified and color-coded in order to categorize them using Nord's (2005) classification, i.e. in terms of pragmatic, convention-related, linguistic, and text-specific problems. At the same time, the translation technique used to solve each problem was also color-coded and was detected and classified in the light of Molina and Hurtado's (2001) revised translation techniques.

6) The most relevant results were described by presenting the ST excerpts illustrating the translation problem and their corresponding translation containing the technique applied. In this way, the relationship between the problem and the solution was exemplified in order to provide a better understanding of the translation process.

Below is the result of the textual analysis conducted on the book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes, which establishes the fundamentals for the translation of the first four chapters and for analysis of translation problems and techniques.

4.2 Genre and text typology

The factors considered in the textual analysis are highly dependent on the typology and genre of a text. Therefore, the ST was first analyzed in terms of text typology and genre before performing Nord's (2005) textual analysis.

- a) **Genre:** It is a “conventional form of texts associated with particular types of social occasion” (Hatim & Mason, 1993, p.241). *How to Be Somebody* belongs to two textual genres: personal growth and spirituality (from a Catholic perspective). It is a personal growth text because it guides the receiver to get rid of pride and become humble to reach the other virtues, but it is also a spiritual text because this guidance is made through the teachings of the Catholic faith to reach holiness.
- b) **Text typology:** It is a “conceptual framework which enables us to classify texts in terms of communicative intentions, serving as an overall rhetorical purpose” (Hatim & Mason, 1993, p.156). The book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes is an instructional text because it focuses on the formation of future behavior by attempting to regulate the way people act or think through instruction (Hatim & Mason, 1993, p. 156), namely to develop the virtue of humility.

4.3 Textual analysis of the book *How to Be Somebody*

According to Nord (2005), textual analysis for translation requires the analysis of 1) extratextual factors, i.e. sender, sender's intention, audience, media, place, time, motive, and communicative function; and 2) intratextual factors, i.e. subject matter, content, presuppositions, composition, paralinguistic elements, lexis, syntax, and suprasegmental elements. Considering those factors in the textual analysis of the book *How to Be Somebody*, the outcome is as follows.

4.3.1 Extratextual factors

- a) **The sender:** The book was written by Mark Mendes, a Brazilian Catholic layman and farmer who lives in California. *How to Be Somebody* is his first book, which emerged from his personal experience of fighting against the vice of pride.
- b) **Sender's intention:** The author's main intention is to guide the receivers step by step in the process of developing the virtue of humility (appellative intention). For this, he gives detailed information (referential intention) about what humility and pride are, the types of pride, the stages of humility, and examples, among other information, to make it very clear to the receivers what they should fight (pride) to achieve their goal (the virtue of humility). This intention was preserved in the TT.
- c) **Audience:** There are two audiences to analyze in this section: the ST audience and the TT audience.
 - **The ST audience:** As pride is considered a capital sin, the one that most hinders reaching holiness, this book is aimed at young and adult Catholics in general. The author uses familiar language to achieve closeness to his receivers, which evidences that they are not specialized. However, because of the language and presence of cultural references, e.g. mentions of songs, sayings, etc., the book is addressed to a Catholic English-speaking audience in the United States, more specifically in California.
 - **The TT audience:** The TT is addressed to young and adult Hispanic Catholics in California. Hispanics are "people who speak Spanish, especially those who have origins in Latin America and are living in the USA" (The California-Mexico Studies Center, 2017). According to the Public Religion Research Institute's Annual American Values Atlas (2022), 34% of all people in California are Catholics, of which 23% are Hispanic Catholics, which means that 67% of Catholics in this state are Hispanics. As they reside in the same territory as of the ST audience, they have close contact with Californian and

American cultures, which, in principle, suggests that both audiences share many cultural traits.

- d) **Media:** The ST is transmitted in two written media: as a physical book and as an e-book. On the companion website, there is an audiobook available, too. The TT is expected to be transmitted in the same written media as that of the ST.
- e) **Place of communication:** The ST was written in California, United States, and both the ST and TT audience reside in this state.
- f) **Time of communication:** The ST was written and published in 2014, while the TT was produced in 2024, that is 8 years apart.
- g) **Motive for communication:** Mark Mendes wrote the book for three reasons: 1) his personal struggle with pride, 2) the gap he noticed in a thorough explanation of humility, and 3) the fact that pride is the worst and most common sin in humanity but one of the most overlooked. The author's motives for having the ST translated is to make the book *How to Be Somebody* accessible to the Hispanic Catholic population in California.
- h) **Communicative function:** The ST has an appellative function since it intends to influence the receivers' behavior. Additionally, it has a pedagogical sub-function because the book teaches readers about how to be humble in a deep and easy-to-understand manner. The TT conserves both the function and sub-function of the ST.

4.3.2 Intratextual factors

- a) **Subject matter:** The book is about personal growth and spirituality, specifically about developing the virtue of humility.
- b) **Content:** The book shows the virtue of humility as the foundation of all the virtues and the key to holiness and happiness. It includes a profound explanation of humility as well as its opposite, pride, for the receivers to reflect upon this. It draws on quotes from

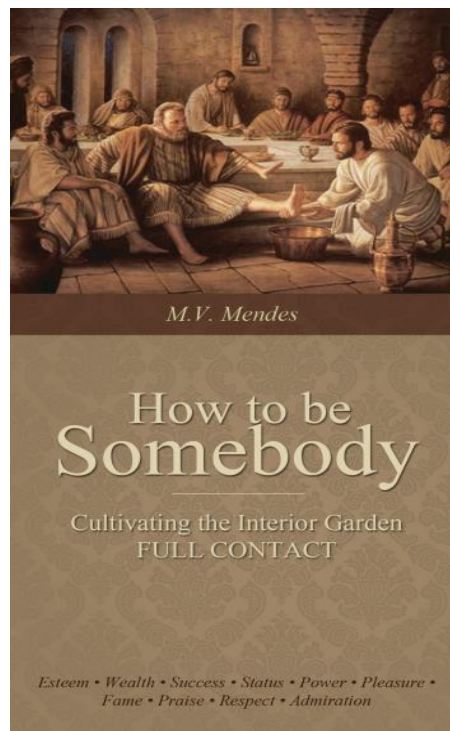
the Bible and of saints, as well as from examples of these saints' lives and their advice on the subject. Additionally, the stages of humility and practices for cultivating it are clearly explained as well as prayers and personal meditations. It also features the concept of a Pride-ometer, a list of questions to guide the receivers in the recognition of this sin in their souls so that they can remove it and replace it with humility. The author presents the content in an easy-to-understand manner and advises with consistency, coherence, and cohesion.

- c) **Presuppositions:** The ST and TT presuppose that their respective receivers agree with the teachings of the Catholic Church and its authority. Also, as some cultural references to the United States are included in both ST and TT, they presuppose that these references are shared by the ST and TT audiences.
- d) **Text composition:** The full ST has 189 pages and its content is organized into 15 short chapters. However, only the first four chapters (19 pages) were used for the present work due to their relevance, since they include the foundations of the book, but also following the *Reglamento para la elaboración y presentación de trabajos de grado* (guidelines to write dissertations for the bachelor's degree in foreign languages at the Universidad del Valle) on the topic of translation, which requires a ST of no more than 20 pages (2021, p.30), and due to the time allotted. As for the composition, in the first chapter, the author introduces the book by answering the question in the title of the book; he states that the secret to being "somebody" is humility. From there, the author starts to guide the receivers to reach this virtue by providing teachings and recommendations. Chapters Two and Three explain what humility and pride are, respectively, and Chapter Four reveals the four types of pride to the receivers.
- e) **Paralinguistic elements:** The cover of the book has different tones of brown, a color that represents wisdom, honesty, and reliability, which is coherent with the fact that the book is a guide. In the middle of the cover, there is the title *How to Be Somebody* in large font and with serif, a question whose answer can be inferred from the picture at

the top of the cover: Jesus washing the feet of the Apostles before the Last Supper, which represents His humility and the argument for the whole text. As for paralinguistic elements inside the book, the chapter titles are written in cursive handwriting style and a large font in contrast to the font in the development of the chapter, which is serif. These two types of font can depict the balance between closeness (with the handwriting) and reliability (with the serif). Quotes are in italic font and names of Saints and key words are in bold. Each page has around three paragraphs and the line spacing is simple, but as the book is pocket-sized, there is no visual overload.

Figure 2

Cover of the book “How to Be Somebody” by Mark Mendes



- f) **Lexis:** Considering that the author is presented as a close person who guides the receivers, the ST has an informal and conversational style. Its lexis includes some idioms from the United States, words from the general language, the use of the first person plural for the author, and the use of “you” to include the receiver, modal verbs, contractions, and interjections. The TT will use a lexis that conserves the style and intention of the ST.

- g) Sentence structure:** The TT has several statements in the simple present tense that are developed or explained with complex sentences, and are supported by examples in past tenses. Also, these statements are reinforced in the form of zero or first conditionals and with several imperatives directed to the receiver. Additionally, introductory questions are included to create a conversational style and a familiar setting, as well as rhetorical questions to make the receiver self-reflect.
- h) Suprasegmental features:** the ST has an advising and friendly tone thanks to interjections; discursive punctuation marks such as commas and ellipses; the use of interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences; the inclusion of parenthesis for complementary information; and in some cases, quotation marks for irony. These suprasegmental features were preserved for the TT to keep the same tone.

4.4 Validity and reliability

The possibility of contacting the author of the book allowed us to get further information about it, which is relevant for the textual analysis and, in consequence, for better determining the Skopos.

Besides, the translation was proofread and revised many times, leaving it aside for short periods in order to detect errors after resuming and produce a reliable translation. The same procedure was carried out for the analysis of translation problems and the techniques applied to solve them. Also, the translation and annotations produced in this study were supervised by a professional translator, giving it more validity and trustworthiness.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Before starting the present work, Mark Mendes, the author of the book *How to Be Somebody*, was contacted via e-mail to request his permission for the translation of his book into Spanish. His permission was granted. Besides, the book was created to be distributed for non-profit purposes as expressly stated at the beginning of the book: “This booklet both in audio and written form is in no way ever to be sold. It was specifically put together to give out

free of charge to all who wish to learn more about the important virtue of humility” (Mendes, 2014, p.1). This is also evident on the official companion website¹, where its e-book version is available for everybody. In this order of ideas, carrying out the translation of the book into Spanish did not imply a profit-related ethical issue, because, in essence, the intention behind translating it was not about generating revenue but about spreading Mendes’s knowledge of humility with the Spanish-speaking audience.

As the translation was commissioned for the purpose of publication, no appendices containing the translations of the selected chapters will be provided for copyright reasons.

¹ <https://howtobesomebody.org/read-e-book-1>

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we present the translation problems found and the techniques applied during the translation process of the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes, from English into Spanish. In the first instance, the frequency of translation problems and techniques is provided in a purely informative manner, as the main objective of the study was the descriptive analysis as is presented later.

5.1 Frequency of translation problems and techniques

There were translation problems across all four categories proposed by Nord (2005), with a total of ten subcategories. The most prevalent types of problems were pragmatic problems (44.4%), and convention-related problems (30.9%), linguistic problems (20.5%) also had a significant frequency, while text-specific problems (4.2%) were minor. Within the pragmatic problems category, the primary subcategory was contact with the receiver, accounting for 43.7% of all issues. For convention-related problems, the top subcategory was proper names, making up 23.9% of the total problems within this category. The main subcategory within linguistic problems was syntax, representing 17% of the issues. The frequencies of text-specific problems and those of the other subcategories were significantly lower, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of translation problems encountered

Translation Problem Category	Translation Problems subcategories	Frequency	Percentage per subcategory	Percentage per category
Pragmatic Problems	Contact with the receiver:	62	43.7%	44.4%
	Temporal deixis	1	0.7%	
Convention-related Problems	Proper Names			30.9%
	• People's names	34	23.9%	
	• Title of Works	6	4.2%	
	Interjections	3	2.1%	

	Traditions/behaviors	1	0.7%	
Linguistic Problems	Syntax	24	17%	20.5%
	Idioms	2	1.4%	
	Religious terminology	3	2.1%	
Text-specific Problems	Style	5	3.5%	4.2%
	Writing issues	1	0.7%	

The prominence of these three most frequent translation problems can be due to 1) the text typology (instructional text) 2) the genres of the book (personal growth and spirituality), and 3) the linguistic difference between English and Spanish. Contact with the receiver, for instance, is a characteristic of instructional texts and personal growth genres because they guide the reader to a specific behavior; they tend to use the imperative mood or may include the second person singular/plural. The latter can be challenging to translate into Spanish because of the different possibilities that exist for the second person in the TL (it can be “tú”, “usted”, “vos”, “ustedes” or “vosotros”, as will be shown in the qualitative analysis). As for proper names, it is common to find them in spirituality genres, especially in Catholic spirituality, because of the recurrent references to the lives of saints or Catholic books. And lastly, there are differences in the syntax of English and Spanish that can be problematic when translating a text.

Considering translation techniques, eight out of Molina and Hurtado’s 18 techniques were applied. Their frequency was mostly linked to the type of translation problem subcategory, i.e. each translation problem was predominantly solved with the same translation technique(s), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency of the translation techniques used in relation to the subcategories of translation problems

Translation Problem	Translation Problems Found (subcategories)	Translation Technique Applied
Pragmatic Problems	Contact with the receiver (62)	Literal translation and reduction (62)
	Temporal deixis (1)	Modulation (1)
Convention-related Problems	Proper Names a) People's names (34) b) Title of works (6)	a) Established equivalent (27) and borrowing (7) b) Amplification (2), adaptation (3), and established equivalent (1)
	Interjections (3)	Established equivalent (3)
	Traditions/behaviors (1)	Amplification (1)
Linguistic Problems	Syntax (24)	Linguistic amplification and reduction (24)
	Idioms (2)	Adaptation (1), established equivalent and reduction (1)
	Religious terminology (3)	Established equivalent and amplification (3)
Text-specific Problems	Style (5)	Reduction (5)
	Writing issues (1)	Modulation (1)

Some of these techniques were applied to more than one problem subcategory, as presented in Table 3. The most common technique used was “established equivalent”, which was applied to five different subcategories, followed by the techniques of “reduction”, applied to four, and “amplification”, applied to three. Adaptation and modulation techniques were used in two different subcategories; and literal translation, borrowing, and linguistic amplification only in one each.

Table 3

Frequency of translation techniques used to solve different translation problem subcategories

Translation technique	Number of translation problem subcategories in which they were applied	Problem subcategory solved with the technique
Established equivalent	5	- People's names - Title of works - Interjections - Idioms - Religious terminology
Reduction	4	- Contact with the receiver - Syntax - Idioms - Style
Amplification	3	- Title of works - Traditions/behaviors - Idioms
Adaptation	2	- Title of works - Idioms
Modulation	2	- Temporal deixis - Writing issues
Literal translation	1	- Contact with the receiver
Borrowing	1	- People's names
Linguistic amplification	1	- Syntax

Although this frequency of translation techniques is important to illustrate some trends found during the translation process of the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody*, they cannot be generalized for texts belonging to the personal growth and spirituality genres, due to the sample size. That is why the present work focuses mainly on a qualitative analysis

of the translation problems encountered and the translation techniques applied in order to provide a contextualized description of them as follows.

5.2 Descriptive analysis

For this section, only the most relevant translation problems were chosen and grouped together into categories and subcategories. For each subcategory, the excerpts of both the ST and the TT are used to illustrate the problems and the corresponding translation technique(s) applied to solve them. Additionally, an analysis of the translation of each excerpt is provided to explain the translation decisions made.

5.2.1 Pragmatic Problems

The problems that arose from this category were the following:

- Contact with the receiver
- Temporal deixis

5.2.1.1 Contact with the receiver. Instructional texts tend to include the receiver in them because of their appellative and pedagogical function. This emerges as a translation problem from English into Spanish due to the different possibilities that the second person of “you” has: The singular forms such as “tú”, “usted” and “vos”; and the plural forms “ustedes” and “vosotros”.

Example:

- a) What you are, what you truly are, is what you are in the sight of Almighty God, nothing more, nothing less.
- b) Greatness is the perfect fulfillment of God’s will in your life.
- c) And if you really want to irrigate the soil, add the Litany of Humility to your daily gardening.

Translation:

- a) Lo que eres, lo que verdaderamente eres, es lo que eres a los ojos de Dios todopoderoso, nada más ni nada menos.

- b) La grandeza es el perfecto cumplimiento de la voluntad de Dios en tu vida.
- c) Y si realmente quieres regar la tierra, añade la Letanía de la Humildad a tu jardinería diaria.

Translation technique: Literal translation and reduction.

Analysis: In these extracts, the author included the receiver using the second person singular (a), its possessive adjective (b), and the imperative mood (c). As it was mentioned before, in Spanish there are different translations for the second person: The singular forms such as “tú”, “usted” and “vos”; and the plural forms “ustedes” and “vosotros”. To create a more personal reading on the TA, the plural forms were discarded. As for the form “vos”, this is a linguistic variation present in a number of Spanish-speaker countries; however, this form was also discarded since the TA is people from different Latin American countries living in California, and as the use and formality of this form are diverse depending on the country, it could be problematic. Finally, considering that 1) the book *How to Be Somebody* is a non-specialized text, that 2) its purpose is to guide the reader to the development of a virtue, and that 3) “tú” provides a closer and friendlier image of the sender in the TA than “usted”, this former was selected with all its related forms and grammatical paradigms. Additionally, the subject pronouns in this fragment can be tacit, so they were omitted (reduction technique) and the rest was translated literally.

5.2.1.2 Temporal deixis. Temporal deixis refers to a temporal expression or word, such as “now”, “last week”, “yesterday”, and “tomorrow”, among others. It is a translation problem because of the temporal distance between the ST and TT.

Example:

- a) The mother finally confessed what she did only after her son, now eight, attempted suicide.

Translation:

- a) La mujer finalmente confesó lo que había hecho solo después de que su hijo, de ocho años en ese entonces, intentara suicidarse.

Translation technique: Modulation.

Analysis: The book was written in 2014, so the reference to this child's age cannot be updated. The technique used to solve this problem was modulation because despite the temporal deixis being modified, sense was maintained.

5.2.2 Convention-related Problems

The problems that arose from this category were the following:

- Proper Names
- Interjections
- Traditions/behaviors

5.2.2.1 Proper names. This category is considered a convention-related translation problem because names can change depending on the culture, the language, or the existence of equivalents. The decisions made to solve this problem were diverse. In the present work, two subcategories of this type of convention-related problem were found: people's names, and titles of works.

5.2.2.1.1 People's names

Examples:

- a) Recall St. Therese the Little Flower. She did simple things, ordinary things, all the little things that we do every day, but she did them in a spirit of perfect love, humility, and simplicity.
- b) The apostle St. James has some pretty strong words about pride: God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.
- c) Joseph Malaise, S.J., explains the various vices connected to pride such as presumption, ambition, vainglory, vanity, boasting, bragging, and ostentation.

Translations:

- a) Recordemos a Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús. Ella hizo cosas sencillas, ordinarias, todas las cosas pequeñas que hacemos cada día, pero ella las hizo en un espíritu de amor perfecto, de humildad y de simplicidad.
- b) El apóstol Santiago tiene unas palabras muy fuertes sobre la soberbia: "Dios se opone a los orgullosos, pero trata con bondad a los humildes".
- c) Joseph Malaise, S.J., explica los muchos vicios que se asocian con la soberbia, tales como la presunción, la ambición, la vanagloria, la vanidad, el alarde, la jactancia y la ostentación.

Translation techniques: Established equivalent and borrowing.

Analysis: Taking into account that the Catholic Church is a universal religion, most saints have an established equivalent in major languages, of which Spanish is one as can be seen in excerpts (a) and (b). For the other people's names mentioned in the book, the borrowing translation technique was used (c) since all of them referred to authors of works in English.

5.2.2.1.2 Titles of works**Examples:**

- a) Do you remember the Country song by Travis Tritt; *I'm gonna be somebody someday?*
- b) Let me share a clipping with you from Mary Ann Budnik's book *Raise Happy Children...Teach Them Joy* that drives home the various types of pride we just discussed.
- c) The biblical quotations in the following pages are taken from the Douay-Rheims, RSVCE, and NAB editions of the Old and New Testaments.

Translation:

- a) ¿Recuerdas la canción country de Travis Tritt: *I'm gonna be somebody someday*, (que traduce "Voy a ser alguien algún día")?

- b) Déjame compartirte un fragmento del libro de Mary Ann Budnik titulado *Raise Happy Children... Teach Them Joy* (que se traduce "Cría niños felices... Enséñales la alegría") que destaca los diferentes tipos de soberbia que acabamos de discutir.
- c) Las citas bíblicas en las siguientes páginas fueron tomadas de las ediciones del Antiguo y del Nuevo testamento de la Biblia de Jerusalén, de la Biblia Latinoamericana y de la Biblia Dios Habla Hoy.

Translation technique: Amplification and adaptation.

Analysis: When a text includes a musical reference, such as the first excerpt (a), the translator can replace it with an adaptation that has a similar or the same effect in the TA. However, as the TA of the present work resides in the same country and state of the SA, which means that they are in some way in contact with the SC, it was decided to preserve the name of the song and apply the amplification technique to provide the translation of the title into Spanish. Similarly, as there is not a Spanish version of the book *Raise Happy Children... Teach Them Joy* in excerpt (b), it had to be translated by using the amplification technique. As for excerpt (c), which contains three Catholic Bible versions in English that are widespread in the United States, the adaptation technique was applied by referring to three Spanish Catholic Bible versions that are equally widespread in Latin America.

5.2.2.2 Interjections. Interjections change depending on the language or culture. Although there are established equivalents for them, some of them have more than one equivalent. That is why their translation can be a problem.

Examples:

- a) Come, O Holy Spirit! Enlighten my understanding in order that I may know your commands.
- b) Oh, I'm so weak; I'm so sinful; I'm so little; what can I do?

Translations:

- a) ¡Ven, oh Espíritu Santo! Ilumina mi entendimiento a fin de que pueda conocer tus mandatos.
- b) Ah, soy tan débil, tan pecador, tan pequeño, ¿qué puedo hacer?"

Translation technique: Established equivalent.

Analysis: In the case of the interjection “O”, its established equivalent in Spanish is “Oh”, which is mainly found in poetry or literature. In excerpt (a), it is present in prayer. As for the English interjection “oh”, it can be translated into Spanish as “oh” to express surprise or strong emotion, or as “ah” to express understanding, relief, disappointment, resignation, or less strong emotion. Therefore, the more appropriate equivalent for the interjection in excerpt (b) is “ah”, since it is an expression of resignation.

5.2.2.3 Traditions/behaviors. A text which includes traditions or behaviors can be problematic when translating it because those features may not be understood by the TA. The solutions for these problems must be proposed considering the knowledge that the TA has of the SC or how close the TA is to it.

Example:

- a) If you haven't done so yet, now is the time to take off the bragging bumper sticker about your honor student!

Translation:

- a) Si aún no lo ha hecho, ¡es hora de que retires de tu parachoques la presuntuosa calcomanía de tu estudiante de honor!¹

¹ Algunos padres en Estados Unidos tienen la tradición de pegar la calcomanía de “Estudiante de Honor” en el parachoques del carro cuando su hijo ha ganado esa distinción en el colegio o la universidad.

Translation technique: Amplification.

Analysis: Despite the fact the TA lives in the United States, not all of them may know the tradition of sticking an honor student sticker on the car bumper. That is why the amplification

translation technique is applied to explain and provide more information about it by using a footnote.

5.2.3 Linguistic Problems

The problems that arose from this category were related to syntax, idioms, and religious terminology.

5.2.3.1 Syntax. Syntactic differences that exist between languages can be a problem when translating a text. Sentence length is one of the syntactic differences between English and Spanish, which was naturally found in this work. English tends to have shorter and simpler sentences; therefore, a translation in English into Spanish direction may create problems with reading fluency in the TT if we transfer all the instances where a full stop appears in the ST.

Examples:

- a) You may be surprised to hear that. We are all truly called to greatness.
- b) He could have said anything. In humility alone He includes all things to learn from him.
- c) The word “humility” comes from the Latin word *humus*. *Humus* means earth, dirt, dust, or soil.

Translations:

- a) Puede sorprenderte escuchar esto, pero en verdad todos estamos llamados a la grandeza.
- b) Él pudo haber dicho cualquier cosa, pero solo en la humildad Él incluye todas las cosas que hay que aprender de Él.
- c) La palabra "humildad" viene del latín *humus*, que significa tierra, barro, polvo o suelo.

Translation techniques: Linguistic amplification and reduction.

Analysis: In excerpts (a) and (b), the period was omitted (reduction), and replaced with a comma, in order to add the connector “pero” (“but”) (linguistic amplification). Thus, these two sentences were linked cohesively, becoming compound sentences. In excerpt (c), the second “humus” and the period were omitted (reduction), and replaced by the subordinating

conjunction “que”, to introduce the relative clause, turning the two sentences into a complex one.

5.2.3.2 Idioms. They are expressions that do not usually have a literal meaning but one provided by the culture. For this reason, they represent a problem for the translator, who has to look for established equivalents or other solutions to convey the same meaning.

Examples:

- a) That’s the American way: You pull yourself up by your bootstraps and go for success.
- b) They decide that their best defense is a good offense - attacking others!

Translation:

- a) Ese es el estilo americano: sales adelante por tus propios medios y vas por el éxito.
- b) Ellos deciden que su mejor defensa es el ataque.

Translation technique: Adaptation, established equivalent, and reduction.

Analysis: The idiom (a) “pull/haul yourself up by the/your (own) bootstrap” means “to improve your situation without any help from other people” (Cambridge University Press, 2024). As there is not an exact established equivalent for the whole idiom in Spanish, the adaptation technique was applied. The translation comprises the idiom “salir adelante” and the phrase “por tus propios medios” to express the same meaning as that of ST in the TT. The second idiom (b) “the best defense is a good offense” means “Proactively attacking one's opponents or enemies is the best way to protect oneself, since they will be too occupied with defending themselves to stage an attack of their own” (Farlex Dictionary of idioms, 2022). The most common equivalent of this idiom is “La mejor defensa es un buen ataque” (as it can be seen in Linguee Dictionary, 2024). Taking into account that excerpt (b) finishes with the phrase “attacking others” and that its translation would be redundant in relation to the idiom (i.e. “atacando a otros”), this part was omitted (reduction).

5.2.3.3 Religious terminology. In the realm of Catholicism, there is specific terminology that can be incomprehensible for those who do not share this faith. However, cultural and linguistic

differences are also a barrier to understanding it and translating it, regardless of whether or not a person is a Catholic.

Examples:

- a) WARNING -- Too much gardening in one day will lead to spiritual calluses.
- b) Secondly, the virtue of humility is required for one to grow in the Catholic faith so as to prevent us from becoming “pick and choose” or “cafeteria Catholics”.

Translations:

- a) ADVERTENCIA -- Demasiada jardinería en un día te producirá callosidad espiritual, que endurecerá tu alma a la acción de Dios.
- b) En segundo lugar, la virtud de la humildad es necesaria para crecer en la fe católica, a fin de evitar que nos convirtamos en “católicos a la carta”, que eligen creer solo las enseñanzas de la Iglesia que prefieren o que les convienen.

Translation technique: Established equivalent and amplification.

Analysis: “Spiritual calluses”, “pick and choose Catholics” or “cafeteria Catholics” are terms related to the way faith is practiced, in this case, in Catholicism. In Spanish, they have an established equivalent, “callosidad espiritual” for the first one, and “católicos a la carta” for the second and third ones. However, as these terms are not commonly used among Spanish-speaking Catholics, the amplification technique was also applied to provide a better understanding of them.

5.2.4 Text-specific Problems

The problems that arose from this category were:

- Writing issues
- Style

5.2.4.1 Writing issues. A ST may sometimes present writing issues that represent obstacles and complexities during the translation process. They can be related to grammatical mistakes,

unclear expressions, and ambiguous phrases, among others. In the present work, writing issues were not frequent, but there was one extract that included this type of problem.

Example:

- a) There was once a story of a man, in his life before his conversion, when he was a millionaire in Southern California, he would drive around in his red Porsche, wearing his shades and three piece suit.

Translation:

- a) Hay una historia sobre un hombre que, antes de su conversión, era millonario y vivía en el sur de California. Conducía un Porsche rojo y llevaba puestos unas gafas de sol y un traje de tres piezas.

Translation technique: Modulation.

Analysis: The ST excerpt is a long sentence that contains clauses adding extra information, which adds too many details that affect clarity and readability. For this reason, the translation technique applied was modulation in order to convey the same meaning by dividing the extract into two sentences.

5.2.4.2 Style. In the ST, there are stylistic strategies used by the author with a specific purpose. However, in some cases, there can be a problem when translating them because they do not have the same effect in the TT. That is the case of the repetition of keywords: while in the ST it is used as a stylistic strategy for emphasis, in the TT it can sound redundant.

Example:

- a) First, let us define the virtue of humility and what the virtue is not; then we will discuss the importance of the virtue of humility and the reason why the vice of pride is so dangerous.
- b) Pride seeks to be the center of attention. Pride always has to have its own way. Pride seeks to control, dominate, and manipulate.

Translations:

- a) Primero, definiremos la virtud de la humildad y lo que no es la virtud; luego, discutiremos su importancia y la razón por la que el vicio de la soberbia es tan peligroso.
- b) Además, la soberbia busca ser el centro de atención y siempre se sale con la suya. Busca controlar, dominar y manipular.

Translation technique: Reduction.

Analysis: “Humility” and “pride” are the two most important words in the book *How to Be Somebody*. That is why the author tends to constantly repeat them in the sections where their meanings are explained. However, when translating the excerpts presented above, the stylistic strategy of repetition turned into redundancy. In excerpt (a), the second instance in which the “virtue of humility” appeared was omitted (reduction technique) and replaced by the possessive pronoun “su”. In excerpt (b), the second time the word “pride” appeared was omitted (reduction technique) and replaced by the conjunction “y” to join the sentences. The last instance of “pride” in the excerpt was also omitted because the subject of the sentence is already known.

5.3. Discussion of findings in light of previous research

Comparison of the findings with those reported in the literature review, especially those using both Nord’s (2005) classification of translation problems and Hurtado’s (2001) translation techniques (Arcos, 2019; Mora, 2014; Cuéllar & Eraso, 2017), demonstrate similarities in the influence of text genre/typology on the occurrence of certain types of translation problems and the techniques applied to solve them. In the present study, for instance, genre (personal growth and spirituality) and text typology (instructional) were significant contributing factors to the high frequency of pragmatic and convention-related problems, which, in turn, influenced the types of translation techniques used.

The TA’s context (Hispanic Catholics residing in California) was also a highly significant factor in the results of the present study, especially as TA shares the same location as that of the SA (American Catholics residing in California). If the audiences had not shared the same context, the translation decisions might have been different.

Given that a variety of concurrent factors influence the translation process, it is not possible to establish direct relations between them, or to determine which aspects are the most influential.

CONCLUSIONS

The present research aimed to analyze the translation problems and the techniques applied to solve those problems during the English-Spanish translation of the first four chapters of the book *How to Be Somebody* by Mark Mendes.

Following Nord's (2005) classification, ten subcategories of translation problems were encountered. Contact with the receiver (43.7%), proper names (23.9%), and syntax (17%) were the most frequent ones. Similarly to the works reported in the literature review, which highlight the influence of genre/text typology on the results, the present study suggests a link between the types of problems found and the genre/text typology of the ST, despite the limitations of its sample size.

As for translation techniques, eight out of Molina and Hurtado's eighteen techniques were applied, and their frequency was mostly linked to that of the subcategory of translation problem they addressed. In other words, each translation problem was predominantly solved with the same translation technique(s). Some of these techniques were applied to more than one subcategory. That was the case of the established equivalent technique, applied to five different subcategories (people's names, title of works, interjections, idioms, and religious terminology), the reduction technique, applied to four (contact with the receiver, syntax, idioms, and style), and the amplification technique, applied to three different subcategories (title of works, traditions/behaviors, and idioms). Adaptation and modulation were used in two different subcategories each (title of works and idioms, and temporal deixis and writing issues, respectively). Literal translation, borrowing, and linguistic amplification were applied only in one each (contact with the receiver, people's names, and syntax, respectively).

Additionally, the sociocultural context is highly influential on the translator's decision-making process, hence the importance of adopting a communicative and sociocultural approach. If the SA and the TA of the translated work had not shared the same location, the translator would have faced a different set of problems, which may have been addressed with a different set of techniques. Therefore, the techniques used to solve translation problems are

not only dependent on the types of problems posed by the translation of the ST but also the sociocultural context of the TA.

The use of Nord's (2005) translation problems classification and Molina and Hurtado's (2001) translation techniques was of great utility, as these typologies facilitated the analysis thanks to their comprehensiveness and clarity. Also, these classifications were the most commonly used in previous similar studies, which allowed for a more standardized comparison between studies.

Regarding the limitations of this study, it was not possible to compare the results with studies that analyze the same genres/text typologies due to the lack of them. It is suggested to perform more analyses of the translation problems and techniques of personal growth and spirituality genres and/or instructional texts to explore the link between genre/text typology and translation problems and techniques in more depth.

Another limitation was the sample size, typical of studies analyzing translation problems and techniques. Although it yielded insightful results, it does not allow for generalizations. Quantitative studies that analyze corpora could provide meaningful relationships between the different factors involved in the analysis of translation problems and techniques, such as genre, text typology, and contexts. This would be possible insofar as more translations covering those variables are carried out, which this study clearly contributes to. Moreover, the analysis of different levels of specialization within the same genre/typology could yield a deeper understanding of the variables involved.

Finally, it is recommended to promote similar translation assignments to foreign language learners and pre-service teachers since they combine translation theoretical bases, which help them explain their translation decisions, with professional practice. Moreover, these assignments are helpful to develop language skills, to raise awareness of the differences between languages, and to recognize the importance of the communicative situation of texts. In this sense, translation will not only be a bridge between languages and cultures but also a tool for professional development in language teaching and learning.

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